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AND

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MODERN READINGS

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RECITATIONS

IN PROSE AND VERSE.

SELECTED AND EDITED

BY

LEOPOLD WAGNER,

EDITOR OF THE

REVISED EDITION OF "CARPENTER'S STANDARD ELOCUTIONIST."



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PREFACE.

In the preparation of the present Volume of "Penny Readings," I have endeavoured to select suitable matter of sterling quality from the best modern authors, which, as far as I have been able to ascertain, has not appeared in any similar work. I have also made the selection as varied as possible, so as to suit all tastes, and to meet the requirements of fireside reading as well as the ordinary purposes of the platform.

I take this opportunity of publicly thanking all those Authors and Publishers by whose courtesy I have been enabled to reprint valuable copyright matter, and trust, in regard to the rest, where no acknowledgment is made, I have not infringed rights of the existence of which I had no knowledge.

L. W.

Brompton.

PREFACE.

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MODERN READINGS

AND

RECITATIONS.

"BLOW UP WITH THE BRIG!"

WILKIE COLLINS.

I HAVE got an alarming confession to make. I am haunted by a ghost. If you were to guess for a hundred years you would never guess what my ghost is. I shall make you laugh to begin with—and afterwards I shall make your flesh creep. My ghost is the ghost of a bedroom candlestick.

Yes, a bedroom candlestick and candle—or a flat candlestick and candle—put it which way you like—that is what haunts me. I wish it was something pleasanter and more out of the common way—a beautiful lady, or a mine of gold and silver, or a cellar of wine and a coach and horses, and such like. But being what it is, I must take it for what it is, and make the best of it; and I shall thank you kindly if you will help me out by doing the same.

I am not a scholar myself; but I make bold to believe that the haunting of any man with anything under the sun begins with the frightening of him. At any rate, the haunting of me with a bedroom candlestick and candle began with the frightening of me half out of my life; and, for the time being, the frightening of me altogether out of my wits. That is not a very pleasant thing to confess, before stating the particulars; but perhaps you will be readier to believe that I am not a downright coward, because you find me bold enough to make a clean breast of it already, to my own great disadvantage, so far.

Here are the particulars, as well as I can put them:—

I was apprenticed to the sea when I was about as tall as my own walking-stick, and I made good enough use of my time to be fit for a mate's berth at the age of twenty-five years.

It was in the year eighteen hundred and eighteen, or nineteen, I am not quite certain which, that I reached the before-mentioned age of twenty-five. You will please to excuse my memory not being very good for dates, names, numbers, places, and such-like. No fear, though, about the particulars I have undertaken to tell you of; I have got them all ship-shape in my recollection; I can see them at this moment, as clear as noonday in my own mind. But there is a mist over what went before, and for the matter of that, a mist likewise over much that came after—and it's not very likely to lift at my time of life, is it?

Well, in eighteen hundred and eighteen, or nineteen, when there was peace in our part of the world—and not before it was wanted, you will say—there was fighting, of a certain scampering kind, going on in that old battle-field, which we seafaring men know by the name of the Spanish Main.

The possessions that belonged to the Spaniards in South America had broken into open mutiny and declared for themselves years before. There was plenty of bloodshed between the new government and the old; but the new had got the best of it, for the most part, under one General Bolivar—a famous man in his time, though he seems to have dropped out of people's memories now. Englishmen and Irishmen with a turn for fighting, and nothing particular to do at home, joined the General as volunteers; and some of our merchants here found it a good venture to send supplies across the ocean to the popular side. There was risk enough, of course, in doing this; but where one speculation of the kind succeeded, it made up for two, at the least, that failed. And that's the true principle of trade, wherever I have met with it, all the world over.

Among the Englishmen who were concerned in this Spanish-American business, I, your humble servant, happened in a small way to be one.

I was then mate of a brig belonging to a certain firm in the City, which drove a sort of general trade, mostly in queer, out-of-the-way places, as far from home as possible; and which freighted the brig, in the year I am speaking of, with a cargo of gunpowder for General Bolivar and his volunteers. Nobody knew anything about our instructions when we sailed, except the captain; and he didn't half seem to like them. I can't rightly say how many barrels of powder we had on board, or how much each barrel held—I only know we had no other cargo. The name of the brig was the Good Intent—a queer name enough, you will tell me, for a vessel laden with gunpowder, and sent to help a revolution. And as far as this particular voyage was concerned, so it was. I mean that for a joke, and I hope you will encourage me by laughing at it.

The Good Intent was the craziest old tub of a vessel I ever went to sea in, and the worst found in all respects. She was

two hundred and thirty or two hundred and eighty tons burden, I forget which ; and she had a crew of eight, all told—nothing like as many as we ought by rights to have had to work the brig. However, we were well and honestly paid our wages ; and we had to set that against the chance of foundering at sea, and on this occasion, likewise, the chance of being blown up into the bargain.

In consideration of the nature of our cargo, we were harassed with new regulations which we didn't at all like, relative to smoking our pipes and lighting our lanterns ; and, as usual in such cases, the captain who made the regulations preached what he didn't practise. Not a man of us was allowed to have a bit of lighted candle in his hand when he went below, except the skipper ; and he used his light when he turned in, or when he looked over his charts on the cabin table, just as usual.

This light was a common kitchen candle, or "dip," and it stood in an old battered flat candlestick, with all the japan worn and melted off, and all the tin showing through. It would have been more seamanlike and suitable in every respect if he had had a lamp or a lantern ; but he stuck to his old candlestick ; and that same old candlestick has ever afterwards stuck to *me*. That's another joke, if you please, and a better one than the first, in my opinion.

Well (I said "well" before, but it's a word that helps a man on like), we sailed in the brig, and shaped our course, first, for the Virgin Islands, in the West Indies ; and after sighting them, we made for the Leeward Islands next ; and then stood on due south, till the look-out at the mast-head hailed the deck, and said he saw land. That land was the coast of South America: We had had a wonderful voyage, so far. We had lost none of our spars or sails, and not a man of us had been harassed to death at the pumps. It wasn't often the Good Intent made such a voyage as that, I can tell you.

I was sent aloft to make sure about the land, and I did make sure of it.

When I reported the same to the skipper, he went below, and had a look at his letter of instructions and the chart. When he came on deck again, he altered our course a trifle to the eastward—I forget the point on the compass, but that don't matter. What I do remember is, that it was dark before we closed in with the land. We kept the lead going, and hove the brig to in from four to five fathoms water, or it might be six, I can't say for certain. I kept a sharp eye to the drift of the vessel, none of us knowing how the currents ran on that coast. We all wondered why the skipper didn't anchor ; but he said No, he must first show a light at the foretop mast-head, and wait for an answering light on shore. We did wait, and nothing of the sort appeared. It was starlight and calm. What little wind there was came in puffs off the land. I suppose we waited, drifting a

little to the westward, as I made it out, best part of an hour before anything happened—and then, instead of seeing the light on shore, we saw a boat coming towards us, rowed by two men only.

We hailed them, and they answered "Friends!" and hailed us by our name. They came on board. One of them was an Irishman, and the other was a coffee-coloured native pilot, who jabbered a little English.

The Irishman handed a note to our skipper, who showed it to me. It informed us that the part of the coast we were off was not over safe for discharging our cargo, seeing that spies of the enemy (that is to say of the old government) had been taken and shot in the neighbourhood the day before. We might trust the brig to the native pilot; and he had his instructions to take us to another part of the coast. The note was signed by the proper parties; so we let the Irishman go back alone in the boat, and allowed the pilot to exercise his lawful authority over the brig. He kept us stretching off from the land till noon the next day—his instructions, seemingly, ordering him to keep us well out of sight of the shore. We only altered our course in the afternoon so as to close in with the land again a little before midnight.

This same pilot was about as ill-looking a vagabond as ever I saw; a skinny, cowardly, quarrelsome mongrel, who swore at the men, in the vilest broken English, till they were every one of them ready to pitch him overboard. The skipper kept them quiet, and I kept them quiet, for the pilot being given us by our instructions, we were bound to make the best of him. Near nightfall, however, with the best will in the world to avoid it, I was unlucky enough to quarrel with him.

He wanted to go below with his pipe, and I stopped him, of course, because it was contrary to orders. Upon that, he tried to hustle by me, and I put him away with my hand.

I never meant to push him down; but, somehow, I did. He picked himself up as quick as lightning, and pulled out his knife. I snatched it out of his hand, slapped his murderous face for him, and threw his weapon overboard. He gave me one ugly look, and walked aft. I didn't think much of the look then, but I remembered it a little too well afterwards.

We were close in with the land again, just as the wind failed us, between eleven and twelve that night; and dropped our anchor by the pilot's directions.

It was pitch dark, and a dead airless calm. The skipper was on deck with two of our best men for watch. The rest were below, except the pilot, who coiled himself up, more like a snake than a man, on the forecastle. It was not my watch till four in the morning. But I didn't like the look of the night, or the pilot, or the state of things generally, and I shook myself down on deck to get my nap there, and be ready for anything at a moment's notice. The last I remember was the skipper whispering to me

that he didn't like the look of things either, and that he would go below and consult his instructions again. That is the last I remember before the slow, heavy roll of the old brig on the ground swell rocked me off to sleep.

I was awoke by a scuffle on the forecastle, and a gag in my mouth. There was a man on my breast, and a man on my legs; and I was bound hand and foot in half a minute.

The brig was in the hands of the Spaniards. They were swarming all over her. I heard six heavy splashes in the water, one after another. I saw the captain stabbed to the heart as he came running up the companion—and I heard a seventh splash in the water. Except myself, every soul of us on board had been murdered, and thrown into the sea. Why I was left I couldn't think, till I saw the pilot stoop over me with a lantern, and look to make sure of who I was. There was a devilish grin on his face, and he nodded his head at me, as much as to say, *you* were the man who hustled me down and slapped my face, and I mean to play the game of cat and mouse with you in return for it.

I could neither move nor speak; but I could see the Spaniards take off the main hatch and rig the purchases for getting up the cargo. A quarter of an hour afterwards I heard the sweeps of a schooner, or other small vessel, in the water. The strange craft was laid alongside of us, and the Spaniards set to work to discharge our cargo into her. They all worked hard except the pilot; and he came, from time to time, with his lantern, to have another look at me, and to grin and nod always in the same devilish way. I am old enough now not to be ashamed of confessing the truth, and I don't mind acknowledging that the pilot frightened me.

The fright, and the bonds, and the gag, and the not being able to stir hand or foot, had pretty nigh worn me out by the time the Spaniards gave over work. This was just as the dawn broke. They had shifted good part of our cargo on board their vessel, but nothing like all of it; and they were sharp enough to be off with what they had got before daylight.

I need hardly say that I had made up my mind, by this time, to the worst I could think of. The pilot, it was clear enough, was one of the spies of the enemy, who had wormed himself into the confidence of our consignees without being suspected. He, or more likely his employers, had got knowledge enough of us to suspect what our cargo was; we had been anchored for the night in the safest berth for them to surprise us in; and we had paid the penalty of having a small crew, and consequently an insufficient watch. All this was clear enough; but what did the pilot mean to do with *me?*

On the word of a man, it makes my flesh creep now only to tell you what he did with me.

After all the rest of them were out of the brig, except the pilot

and two Spanish seamen, these last took me up, bound and gagged as I was, lowered me into the hold of the vessel, and laid me along on the floor ; lashing me to it with ropes' ends, so that I could just turn from one side to the other, but could not roll myself fairly over, so as to change my place. Then they left me. Both of them were the worse for liquor : but the devil of a pilot was sober—mind that !—as sober as I am at the present moment.

I lay in the dark for a little while, with my heart thumping as if it was going to jump out of me. I lay about five minutes or so, when the pilot came down into the hold alone.

He had the captain's cursed flat candlestick and a carpenter's awl in one hand, and a long thin twist of cotton yarn, well oiled, in the other. He put the candlestick, with a new "dip" candle lighted in it, down on the floor, about two feet from my face, and close against the side of the vessel. The light was feeble enough ; but it was sufficient to show a dozen barrels of gunpowder or more, left all round me in the hold of the brig. I began to suspect what he was after, the moment I noticed the barrels. The horrors laid hold of me from head to foot ; and the sweat poured off my face like water.

I saw him go next to one of the barrels of powder standing against the side of the vessel in a line with the candle, and about three feet, or rather better, away from it. He bored a hole in the side of the barrel with his awl ; and the horrid powder came trickling out as black as hell and dripped into the hollow of his hand, which he held to catch it. When he had got a good handful, he stopped up the hole by jamming one end of his oiled twist of cotton yarn fast into it ; and then he rubbed the powder into the whole length of the yarn, till he had blackened every hair's-breadth of it.

The next thing he did—as true as I sit here, as true as the heaven above us all—the next thing he did was to carry the free end of his long, lean, black, frightful slow-match to the lighted candle alongside my face. He tied it (the bloody-minded villain) in several folds round the tallow dip, about a third of the distance down, measuring from the flame of the wick to the lip of the candlestick. He did that ; he looked to see that my lashings were all safe ; and then he put his face down close to mine, and whispered in my ear, "Blow up with the brig !"

He was on deck again the moment after ; and he and the two others shoved the hatch on over me. At the farthest end from where I lay they had not fitted it down quite true, and I saw a blink of daylight glimmering in when I looked in that direction. I heard the sweeps of a schooner fall into the water—splash ! splash ! fainter and fainter, as they swept the vessel out in the dead calm, to be ready for the wind in the offing. Fainter and fainter, splash ! splash ! for a quarter of an hour or more.

While those sounds were in my ears, my eyes were fixed on the candle.

It had been freshly lit—if left to itself it would burn for between six and seven hours. The slow-match was twisted round it about a third of the way down, and therefore the flame would be about two hours reaching it. There I lay gagged, bound, lashed to the floor; seeing my own life burning down with the candle by my side;—there I lay alone on the sea, doomed to be blown to atoms, and to see that doom drawing on nearer and nearer with every fresh second of time, through nigh on two hours to come, powerless to help myself and speechless to call for help to others. The wonder to me is that I didn't cheat the flame, the slow-match, and the powder, and die of the horror of my situation before my first half-hour was out, in the hold of the brig.

I can't exactly say how long I kept command of my senses after I had ceased to hear the splash of the schooner's sweeps in the water. I can trace back everything I did and everything I thought up to a certain point; but once past that I get all abroad, and lose myself in my memory now, much as I lost myself in my own feelings at the time.

The moment the hatch was covered over again I began, as every other man would have begun in my place, with a frantic effort to free my hands. In the mad panic I was in I cut my flesh with the lashings as if they had been knife-blades; but I never stirred them. There was less chance still of freeing my legs, or of tearing myself from the fastenings that held me to the floor. I gave in when I was all but suffocated for want of breath. The gag, you will please to remember, was a terrible enemy to me; I could only breathe freely through my nose—and that is but a poor vent when a man is straining his strength as far as ever it will go.

I gave in, and lay quiet, and got my breath again; my eyes glaring and straining at the candle all the time.

While I was staring at it, the notion struck me of trying to blow out the flame by pumping a long breath at it suddenly through my nostrils. It was far too high above me, and too far away from me, to be reached in that fashion. I tried, and tried, and tried—and then I gave in again and lay quiet again; always with my eyes glaring at the candle, and the candle glaring at *me*. The splash of the schooner's sweeps was very faint by this time. I could only just hear them in the morning stillness. Splash! splash!—fainter and fainter—splash! splash!

Without exactly feeling my mind going, I began to feel it getting queer as early as this. The snuff of the candle was growing taller and taller, and the length of tallow between the flame and the slow-match, which was the length of my life, was getting shorter and shorter. I calculated that I had rather less than an hour and a half to live.

An hour and a half! Was there a chance, in that time, of a

boat pulling off to the brig from shore? Whether the land near which the vessel was anchored was in possession of our side, or in possession of the enemy's side, I made out that they must, sooner or later, send to hail the brig, merely because she was a stranger in those parts. The question for *me* was, how soon? The sun had not risen yet, as I could tell by looking through the chink in the hatch. There was no coast-village near us, as we knew before the brig was seized, by seeing no lights on shore. There was no wind, as I could tell by listening, to bring any strange vessel near. If I had had six hours to live there might have been a chance for me, reckoning from sunrise to noon. But with an hour and a half, which had dwindled to an hour and a quarter by this time—or, in other words, with the earliness of the morning, the uninhabited coast, and the dead calm all against me—there was not the ghost of a chance. As I felt that, I had another struggle—the last—with my bonds; and only cut myself the deeper for my pains.

I gave in once more, and lay quiet, and listened for the splash of the sweeps.

Gone! Not a sound could I hear but the blowing of a fish now and then on the surface of the sea, and the creak of the brig's crazy old spars, as she rolled gently from side to side with the little swell there was on the quiet water.

An hour and a quarter! The wick grew terribly as the quarter slipped away; and the charred top of it began to thicken and spread out mushroom-shape. It would fall off soon! Would it fall off red-hot, and would the swing of the brig cant it over the side of the candle and let it down on the slow-match? If it would, I had about ten minutes to live instead of an hour.

This discovery set my mind for a minute on a new tack altogether. I began to ponder with myself what sort of a death blowing-up might be. Painful? Well, it would be surely too sudden for that. Perhaps just one crash inside me or outside me, or both, and nothing more? Perhaps not even a crash; that and death and the scattering of this living body of mine into millions of fiery sparks might all happen in the same instant. I couldn't make it out; I couldn't settle how it would be. The minute of calmness in my mind left it before I had half done thinking; and I got all abroad again.

When I came back to my thoughts, or when they came back to me (I can't say which), the wick was awfully tall, the flame was burning with a smoke above it, the charred top was broad and red, and heavily spreading out to its fall.

My despair and horror at seeing it took me in a new way, which was good and right, at any rate, for my poor soul. I tried to pray—in my own heart you will understand, for the gag put all lip-praying out of my power. I tried, but the candle seemed to burn it up in me. I struggled hard to force my eyes from the slow, mouldering flame, and to look up through the

chink in the hatch at the blessed daylight. I tried once, tried twice, and gave it up. I tried next only to shut my eyes, and keep them shut—once, twice—and the second time I did it. "God bless old mother, and sister Lizzie; God keep them both, and forgive *me*;" that was all I had time to say, in my own heart, before my eyes opened again in spite of me, and the flame of the candle flew into them, flew all over me, and burnt up the rest of my thoughts in an instant.

I couldn't hear the fish blowing now; I couldn't hear the creak of the spars; I couldn't think; I couldn't feel the sweat of my own death-agony on my face—I could only look at the heavy, charred top of the wick. It swelled, tottered, bent over to one side, dropped—red-hot at the moment of its fall—black and harmless, even before the swing of the brig had canted it over into the bottom of the candlestick.

I caught myself laughing.

Yes! laughing at the safe fall of the bit of wick. But for the gag I should have screamed with laughing. As it was, I shook with it inside me—shook till the blood was in my head, and I was all but suffocated for want of breath. I had just sense enough left to feel that my own horrid laughter, at that awful moment, was a sign of my brain going at last. I had just sense enough left to make another struggle before my mind broke loose like a frightened horse, and ran away with me.

One comforting look at the blink of daylight through the hatch was what I tried for once more. The fight to force my eyes from the candle, and to get that one look at the daylight, was the hardest I had had yet; and I lost the fight. The flame had got hold of my eyes as fast as the lashings had hold of my hands. I couldn't look away from it. I couldn't even shut my eyes when I tried that next, for the second time. There was the wick, growing tall once more. There was the space of unburnt candle between the light and the slow match shortened to an inch or less.

How much life did that inch leave me? Three-quarters of an hour? Half-an-hour? Fifty minutes? Twenty minutes? Steady! an inch of tallow-candle would burn longer than twenty minutes. An inch of tallow! The notion of a man's body and soul being kept together by an inch of tallow! Wonderful! Why, the greatest king that sits on a throne can't keep a man's body and soul together; and here's an inch of tallow that can do what the king can't! There's something to tell mother when I get home, which will surprise her more than all the rest of my voyages put together. I laughed inwardly again at the thought of that; and shook, and swelled, and suffocated myself, till the light of the candle leaped in through my eyes, and licked up the laughter, and burnt it out of me, and made me all empty, and cold, and quiet once more.

Mother and Lizzie! I don't know when they came back; but

they did come back—not, as it seemed to me, into my mind this time ; but right down bodily before me, in the hold of the brig.

Yes : sure enough, there was Lizzie, just as light-hearted as usual, laughing at me. Laughing ! Well, why not ? Who is to blame Lizzie for thinking I'm lying on my back drunk in a cellar, with the beer barrels all around me ? Steady ! she's crying **now**—spinning round and round in a fiery mist, wringing her hands, screeching out for help—fainter and fainter, like the splash of the schooner's sweeps. Gone !—burnt up in the fiery mist. Mist ? fire ? no, neither one nor the other. It's mother makes the light—mother knitting, with ten flaming points at the ends of her fingers and thumbs, and slow matches hanging in bunches all round her face, instead of her own grey hair. Mother, in her old arm-chair, and the pilot's long, skinny hands hanging over the back of the chair, dripping with gunpowder. No ! no gunpowder, no chair, no mother—nothing but the pilot's face, shining red-hot, like a sun in the fiery mist ; turning upside down in the fiery mist ; running backwards and forwards along the slow match, in the fiery mist ; spinning millions of miles in a minute, in the fiery mist—spinning itself smaller and smaller into one tiny point, and that point darting, on a sudden, straight into my head—and then all fire and no mist—no hearing, no seeing, no thinking, no feeling—the brig, the sea, my own self, the whole world, all gone together !

After what I've just told you, I know nothing and remember nothing, till I woke up (as it seemed to me) in a comfortable bed, with two rough and ready men, like myself, sitting on each side of my pillow, and a gentleman standing watching me at the foot of the bed. It was about seven in the morning. My sleep (or what seemed like my sleep to me) had lasted better than eight months. I was among my own countrymen in the island of Trinidad—the men at each side of my pillow were my keepers, turn and turn about ; and the gentleman standing at the foot of the bed was the doctor. What I said and did in those eight months I never have known, and never shall. I woke out of it as if it had been one long sleep—that's all I know.

It was another two months or more before the doctor thought it safe to answer the questions I asked him.

The brig had been anchored, just as I had supposed, off a part of the coast which was lonely enough to make the Spaniards pretty sure of no interruption, so long as they managed their murderous work quietly under cover of night.

My life had not been saved from the shore, but from the sea. An American vessel becalmed in the offing had made out the brig as the sun rose, and the captain having his time on his hands in consequence of the calm, and seeing a vessel anchored where no vessel had any reason to be, had manned

one of his boats and sent his mate with it, to look a little closer into the matter, and bring back a report of what he saw.

What he saw, when he and his men found the brig deserted and boarded her, was a gleam of candlelight through the chink in the hatchway. The flame was within about a thread's breadth of the slow match, when he lowered himself into the hold; and if he had not had the sense and coolness to cut the match in two with his knife, before he touched the candle, he and his men might have been blown up along with the brig, as well as me. The match caught, and turned into sputtering red fire, in the very act of putting the candle out; and if the communication with the powder barrel had not been cut off, the Lord only knows what might have happened.

What became of the Spanish schooner and the pilot I have never heard from that day to this.

As for the brig, the Yankees took her as they took me, to Trinidad, and claimed their salvage, and got it, I hope, for their own sakes. I was landed just in the same state as when they rescued me from the brig, that is to say, clean out of my senses. But please to remember, it was a long time ago; and, take my word for it, I was discharged cured, as I have told you. Bless your hearts, I'm all right now, as you may see. I'm a little shaken by telling the story, as is only natural—a little shaken, my good friends, that's all.

(*By permission of the Author.*)

ON THE DEATH OF TOM HOOD'S CHILD.

CHARLES LAMB.

I SAW where in the shroud did lurk
A curious frame of Nature's work.
A Floweret crushed in the bud,
A nameless piece of Babyhood,
Was in her cradle-coffin lying;
Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying;
So soon to exchange the imprisoning womb
For darker closets of the tomb!
She did but ope an eye, and put
A clear beam forth, then straight up-shut
For the long dark: ne'er more to see
Through glasses of mortality.
Riddle of destiny, who can show
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below?

Shall we say, that Nature blind
Check'd her hand, and changed her mind,
Just when she had exactly wrought
A finished pattern without fault?
Could she flag, or could she tire,
Or lacked she the Promethean fire
(With her nine Moons' long workings sickened)
That should thy little limbs have quickened?
Limbs so firm they seemed to assure
Life of health, and days mature:
Woman's self in miniature!
Limbs so fair they might supply
(Themselves now but cold imagery)
The sculptor to make Beauty by?
Or did the stern-eyed Fate descry
That babe, or mother, one must die;
So in mercy left the stock,
And cut the branch; to save the shock
Of young years widow'd; and the pain,
When single state comes back again
To the lone man who, 'reft of wife,
Thenceforward drags a maimed life?
The economy of Heaven is dark;
And wisest clerks have missed the mark
Why Human buds, like this, should fall,
More brief than fly ephemeral,
That has his day; while shrivell'd crones
Stiffen with age to stocks and stones;
And crabbed use the conscience sears
In sinners of an hundred years.
Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,
Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss
Rites, which custom does impose,
Silver bells and baby clothes;
Coral redder than those lips,
Which pale death did late eclipse;
Music framed for infants' glee,
Whistle never tuned for thee;
Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,
Loving hearts were they which gave them.
Let not one be missing; nurse,
See them laid upon the hearse
Of infant slain by doom perverse.
Why should kings and nobles have
Pictured trophies to their grave;
And we, churls, to thee deny
Thy pretty toys with thee to lie,
A more harmless vanity?

THE STORY OF A ROYAL SWAN!

CLEMENT SCOTT.

THE ladies are never tired of lifting their pretty voices in indignant but utterly unnecessary protest against clubs in general, and clubs in particular; but I honestly believe that even the most prejudiced of her sex would have made an honourable exception in favour of the Adelphi. How our bachelor members of the Adelphi ever got married, or how married members of the honourable fraternity ever went home at respectable hours, I never could discover.

It was certainly the most fascinating, well-selected, good-humoured, witty, learned, common-sense, give-and-take society that ever banded together for conversation, mutual improvement, and good-fellowship. As all men of the world know, there are clubs and clubs. There are stuck-up, stiff-and-starched clubs, where no members dare to sit down to dinner without dress-coats: where selfish old gentlemen show their conviviality by grumbling over every dish placed before them, and their fraternal spirit by hiding the last volume of the popular novel, and sitting upon the last edition of all the evening papers. There are dictatorial clubs, where an irascible and determined old gentleman takes the chair, is pleased to be alternately smart and rude, is surrounded by an open-mouthed *coterie* of toadies, and does not allow any member to ventilate an opinion in opposition to the established theories of the President. There are theatrical clubs—pleasant and jolly enough,—but too much inclined to harp upon the same string, which, though vastly interesting to the individual, is detrimental to the flow of general conversation. And there are class clubs too general to mention, committed to the unintentional error of confining prejudices instead of expanding thought.

The Adelphi, by some miracle of good luck, escaped the faults of its predecessors and companions. The common ground on which its members stood was an appreciation and admiration of Art in its widest and most extended sense. Art of every shade and class was welcome within its walls. The painter, the sculptor, the actor, the author, hob-nobbed together over its hospitable table. The barrister who loved the fine arts and the solicitor who was at home in literary and artistic society were alike eligible for admission.

I have seen at the same table the author who wrote the last new book and the journalist who reviewed it; the last successful dramatist and the prominent newspaper critic, the composer and the singer, the actor and the manager, the solicitor and the client, the barrister and the juryman. When a traveller arrived home after wonderful discoveries, he was made welcome at the Adelphi. When an actor came over from America, he

was duly enrolled as an honorary member. The Adelphi, in fact, was a happy family of art, studiously free from spite, clique, or prejudice.

Men of the world who have neglected their education sometimes think that they can make up the lost ground by a diligent study of encyclopædias and dictionaries. For my own part, as a practical man, I should have advised in preference an evening at the Adelphi, where men spoke well and to the point; where everyone who had anything worth saying was listened to, and where conversation was as varied as it was charming.

My dear, good ladies, you would have excused the late hours of your incorrigible lords and masters, had it been possible for you to peep occasionally into the Adelphi. The idea of coming home to bed when Speakton was telling story after story of his adventures; when Roseleigh was passionately proclaiming his admiration for Victor Hugo; when Hyram West was telling American stories; when Tom Gerridge was describing, as only Tom Gerridge could describe, the plot and characters of a future comedy; when Wordsworth was making puns in one corner of the room, and the "old boy" with the silvery hair was discussing old theatrical days in another; when Charles Cobham was glorious with anecdotes of the bar, and Johnny Toast was capping story with imitation!

Go to bed, indeed! Why, who could possibly go to bed and leave such a feast of revelry and flow of soul? It was like a perpetual entertainment, with the right people coming on at the right minute, and not one dull second as the cruel hours hastened on their course.

The Adelphi boasted of many merry moments in the course of the year, and the members were never tired of getting together when they could.

There was the "barge-party" in the summer, when some good member put an old Thames barge at the service of the Club, and a select set sailed away down to the Medway, and made pic-nic in a meadow.

There was the Gadshill expedition in the spring, led by the popular "old boy," away through the Cobham woods, with a wind-up at the "Falstaff," opposite the study window at which Charles Dickens wrote.

There was the annual dinner at Gravesend or Rosherville, which always resulted in a night in the country and a merry walk on the morrow.

There was the standing invitation to Shakspeare land at Stratford-on-Avon, or to Chatterly's Folly on the Worcestershire Hills. They were indeed brethren, these members of the Adelphi, and under their guidance the meaning of the word Club was first discovered.

But perhaps the jolliest Adelphi festivity of all was the club supper at Christmas. Work was comparatively at a stand-still,

The pantomimes were out, the plays were in full swing, the critical notices were written, the novels were published, the law courts were closed, and it did no harm if the pictures remained where they were on the easel.

The Christmas supper was a great institution. It was a standing rule that, besides bringing good stories, good songs, and good spirits, each member should contribute some item to the jovial feast. Everything was acceptable, from a farm-house loaf to a pot of marmalade. The silver plate and tankards were all sent in from various rooms. Sportsmen sent up the game; good ladies who were not prejudiced contributed the flowers. The rooms were hung with choice paintings and engravings, all lent for the occasion. And sometimes came the most touching and tender signs of affectionate remembrance. Poor Paul the artist, banished to the South of France for the winter, and never destined to return, would send a box of Monaco violets for the convivial table, in order that old friends might think of him, and wish him well again; and it seldom happened that such as were away from England on duty or necessity forgot the famous night of the Adelphi supper.

Everything was arranged on the highest scale of festivity. A piano was hired; musicians brought their pet instruments, and on this occasion every member wilfully and obstinately determined to make a night of it.

Now Jack Green was a universal genius and a thorough good fellow. He was a walking encyclopædia, and knew something of everything. In case of any doubt or dispute he was always appealed to, and generally managed to settle the difficulty.

At the outset of his career he was unfortunately cursed with a small competency, sufficient to keep himself comfortably, and the consequence was that he never took to work seriously, or distinguished himself at anything. He was everything by turns, but nothing long. He had travelled and gained experience; what he read he managed to remember. He was a bit of an artist, a bit of a doctor, a bit of a lawyer. He had been in the army, had walked the hospitals, was entitled to wear a barrister's wig, and knew the picture-galleries of the continent by heart. He had even condescended to amateur theatricals, could recite fairly, and was celebrated for singing a good comic song.

What wonder, then, that Jack Green was an oracle and a favourite, and you may guess what consternation prevailed when it was known that Jack Green would not be able to preside over the destinies of the annual Adelphi supper. What could they do without Jack Green? Who was to take the chair? What was to be the special object of interest at this year's supper?

The year before last Jack Green had arranged the procession of the "Boar's Head," and had coached the singing members in the old Latin hymn sung at Queen's College, Oxford, beginning *Caput Apri Defero!* and they all led on the dish from the

kitchen to the club-room, solemnly chanting and "decked with bays and rosemary."

For the next year's feast some enthusiast had slain a peacock, and for this dish all the artists put their heads together and arranged a fantastic Veronese show, which was a great success, but the members of the Club positively refused, when Chiaroscuro, the Pre-Raffaelite artist, insisted that they should all borrow long fair wigs and trunk hose from Clarkson's and May's, in Bow Street. Mr. Whistler was entreated to decorate the old club-room in peacock fresco, but at last a happy compromise was made with feather fans recently imported by eclectic grocers from Japan. But all these glories had departed, and what was to be done for this year's feast, now that nobody had suggested anything and Jack Green was hopelessly absent?

Consternation sat on every face, and gloom hung heavy on every countenance, when suddenly one evening the steward appeared in the club-room carrying in his arms a mysterious box.

It was directed and labelled, marked "immediate," and every "care" was to be taken of the important box.

The hand-writing showed clearly that it came from Jack Green, who was known to be staying somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Isle of Portland and the Chesil Bank. Great was the excitement to know what Jack Green had sent for the supper, for it was to come off to-morrow evening, and as yet everything was behindhand.

A committee of inspection was assembled, and the precious box was opened with great deliberation and care. It might be glass, or decorative art, or game.

First came straw, then innumerable layers of paper, so many that the committee for some time believed it was a hoax, then wool, then sweet herbs and lake flowers mixed up with grass, and last of all a magnificent white swan!

Here was indeed a surprise. They had all eaten boar's head, and had enjoyed peacock, but no single member of the Club had ever tasted swan.

He was indeed a Royal bird; no loiterer on the Thames reaches marked with the Queen's sign, no stray bird belonging to the Vintners' or the Dyers' Company, but one of the unmarked "game of swans" from the famous brood at Abbotsbury, in Dorsetshire, which descended to the Earldom of Ilchester when the monasteries were destroyed.

Here was an archæological and a gastronomic feast at one and the same time.

But there was no time to be lost, and meanwhile how was he to be cooked? The Club library furnished a complete historical account and natural history of the swan, but did not mention a word about the important question of the stuffing and the sauce.

In this emergency a special sub-committee was told off to visit the British Museum directly the doors were open in the morn-

ing, and having studied the history of royal dishes were counselled to return immediately with a sauce and a stuffing on penalty of instant expulsion from the Adelphi.

The charge was instantly undertaken, and George Smith, who was known to be the model cook at every Wimbledon meeting and a professed epicure into the bargain, undertook to superintend the basting of the Royal bird. There he lay on the club table, with his glassy eye and drooping feathers, little knowing what trouble was being undertaken on his behalf. The committee of taste returned punctually from the British Museum, and their labours were rewarded.

They strongly recommended a stuffing of chestnuts and a very peculiar sweet sauce.

The greatest activity prevailed in the kitchen and in the club-room, and the musicians were alive to the importance of the occasion.

When the cover was removed it was arranged that the choristers should break into that pathetic and exquisitely harmonized madrigal "The Silver Swan," and the impromptu poet arranged a humorous ditty on the subject of "The Swan with Two Nicks (Necks)."

All the preliminaries passed off satisfactorily, although some curiosity was expressed at the plucking of the noble bird. The chestnut stuffing was a work of art; the sweet sauce would have done credit to Soyer. In came the garlanded dish amidst the hush of the assembled guests and their friends, preceded by the cook in his shirt-sleeves, who wore for the occasion a garland of rushes. The cover was removed; the madrigal by Orlando Gibbons was dolefully chanted, and, as it happened, gave the cue for the first depression of the evening. For whilst the choir wailed out that the silver swan was "leaning her breast against the reedy shore," and "thus sung her first and last and sung no more," it was anxiously observed that the carver was in trouble. He hacked, he hewed, he carved, he tore, but he could not separate one limb from the obstinate bird. He was called a muff, he was ridiculed, and he was deposed. But the second carver was no better than the first. And what is worse, when the bird was mangled no one could eat it. It was as tough as a shoe, and as insipid as leather. In order to separate the remaining limbs the last volunteer carver was compelled to send for a saw.

It was unanimously voted that the best part of a roast swan was the stuffing, or the sauce.

The tough swan was the signal for universal depression and complete failure. Nothing went off well that night. The stories fell flat, the singers did not distinguish themselves, and such an unusual thing as wrangling was actually heard at the Adelphi supper-table. The evening beginning badly ended miserably, and though no one dared to say so, not a single member enjoyed himself one bit.

But how to tell Jack Green? He was such a good fellow, he had meant so well, and it was such a shame to disappoint him. His life and soul were centered in the Club, and the record of any disastrous failure would have broken his heart. But still Jack Green was coming back, and the murder must out.

When he returned, Jack Green was anxious and fidgety. He did not ask one word about the supper, he did not call for the *menu*, he did not ask about the songs, but he cast his eyes regretfully at the Club walls and heaved a sigh. He was hipped, nervous, and depressed, and evidently there was something on his mind.

At last, a member bolder than the rest, took the bull by the horns and asked Jack Green what was the matter. Was he offended, or had he lost his competency? There was something the matter with a vengeance.

"I am sorry not to see the poor swan."

"See it, what nonsense! What do you mean?"

"Why, didn't you fellows like it?"

"Not a bit, it was beastly; there!"

"But I took so much trouble to get it for you."

"I dare say; and we took a great deal of trouble to get the stuffing."

"But why isn't it stuffed? That's just my grievance."

"Stuffed, my dear Jack! It was stuffed."

"What with?"

"Chestnuts—they wouldn't stand sage and onions."

"Chestnuts! Sage and onions!"

"Yes; and served up with sweet sauce."

Here Jack Green nearly fainted.

"Why, my dear fellows, you don't mean to say you cooked the swan?"

"Cooked it—I should think we did!"

Here Jack Green burst out into an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

"*Cooked it!* Why that *swan was a hundred and ten years old!*"

"What?"

"A veteran swan from the swannery at Abbotsbury, as remarkable as the old carp at Versailles."

"But you sent it to be eaten."

"No, you fool—*to be stuffed*—in a glass case!"

Humiliation fell upon all the assembled company as old Jack Green, still chuckling to himself and stroking his beard, said,

"Fancy eating a swan a hundred and ten years old!"

The Adelphi gradually recovered its spirits, and good fellowship was restored. But from that day to this, one of the forbidden subjects has been the Christmas Supper and the "Old Swan."

(*By permission of the Author.*)

THE SONG OF SONGS.

(*From the German of* C. J. P. SPITTA.)

PERCY G. MOCATTA.

THERE is a song of songs, so sweet,
That hearing, thou must needs repeat,
If once its tender tones thou learnest;
A song by mortal ne'er design'd,
A song of *joy* for humankind,
And yet, how thoughtful, deep, and earnest!

It breathes of love—so pure and vast—
The shadows that this life o'ercast
As mist before the Sun shall flee!
And grief shall cease and sorrow's tear,
When, from a heart, warm, brave, sincere,
Upwells that melting melody!

(*These lines have been set to music by the translator, who is a composer of considerable repute.*)

CALLED ON, IN FRONT.

ALLAN LAIDLAW.

I WAS walking one day down a narrow, close, unsavoury, and somewhat dirty street, or rather extra-sized lane; and while endeavouring to pick my way along, amidst the romping, screaming, shouting, laughing, running, toddling, small humanities of different ages and sizes that swarmed the place like bees, my eye was caught by a small, quaint little shop, the window of which was filled with a strange and grotesque assortment of wigs. Over the door was written in large characters—tumbling about, as if in the jolly stage of inebriety—"THEOPHILUS JONES, THEATRICAL WIG-MAKER, AND ARTIST IN HAIR." Peeping inside the door, I espied in the corner of the shop a venerable, but at the same time, merry-looking old man, seated in an arm-chair, quietly pulling at a yard of clay. His eyes were blue, and twinkled merrily, but his features were of a melancholy cast, and marked with lines of care about the brow and mouth. Something in his physiognomy struck you as strange, till you became aware that the careworn face and the merry eyes presented a kind of facial contradiction, very puzzling and almost annoying. Remembering that I had at home a few wigs in need of repair, I entered the shop, and after having given my order, I endeavoured to draw the old man into

conversation. I had noticed a beautiful photograph hanging on the wall opposite to where the old man was sitting : it was handsomely framed, and was the only attractive object, in a "pretty" sense, in the shop. It was a large-sized photograph, coloured very exquisitely, representing a very pretty little child, dressed in a fancy costume—a theatrical portrait. It struck me at once, it was that of a "child actress." I noticed that the old man occasionally glanced at it with an affectionate expression. This led me to fancy it might be *his* child, or, at any rate, a relative, perhaps a grandchild. I thought I should please him if I praised it, so I went closer, and turning to him, said, "This is a very beautiful portrait of an exceedingly pretty child. A little actress, I presume. Does she belong to the theatre of this town? She looks wonderfully intelligent. I feel quite an interest in her already." The old man never looked at me. His eyes suddenly fixed themselves on the picture with an expression of extreme tenderness ; while in a low voice he said, half to himself—"She *was* a sweet child. She was my child. She was a clever child. She *did* belong to the theatre here, but she's dead now ;" and he sighed deeply. "Her's is a long story, sir ; but if you've a mind to hear it, it does me good to go over it now and then. It seems to calm me like. Me and my missus often go over it together. You see, sir, she was always very quick—a wonderful child that way. First she went on in the children's scenes at the pantomime, then she took children's parts in the plays, and, at last, when she came to be eight years old, they made a 'specialty' of her, and she had good parts specially written for her in the pantomimes ; and it was wonderful how she took to it all and how she studied ; and yet, though you wouldn't think it, she was just like other children ordinarily. When she was on the stage, she was the actress ; but directly she was 'off,' she was the child again. She was a great pet in the green-room ; the company used to a'most spoil her between them. They used to call her the 'little one.' Well, sir, she was very successful, and was a great 'draw.' She got a great deal of applause, and many 'calls,' especially in the pantomimes ; and it was a likely thing, if a stranger went into the green-room, he'd hear the question, 'Where's the little one?' Then, in the distance, might be heard great applause ; then someone would answer, 'Called on, in front.' Ah, sir, they were proud days for me and my old missus ; or, rather, *young* missus she was then. But they were not to last long, sir. You see, it came about this way. She was worked too hard, that was it ; she was worked too hard. It was all very well while she had children's parts, but when she came to play heavy parts of ten or fifteen 'lengths,' exclusive of music, songs, dances, and 'business,' it was too much for her poor little brain, sir. If she'd played children's parts only, and been gradually trained. she might have been alive now, and a

splendid actress, sir. But the end was soon to come, as you shall hear, sir. There was a splendid pantomime to be played the very year she would have been twelve, if she'd have lived through it. It was the 'Babes in the Wood.' She had a fine part written for her, and novel effects were introduced into the great wood scene, where she was lying asleep with her brother. A beautiful vision of little fairy elves, all played by children, took place, and she had to say pretty things about her dream in her sleep. She was very fond of that part, sir. She played it to the life, and great applause was given to her for it. The scene was a'most too pathetic for a pantomime; but it was a great 'draw,' and affected all before and behind the curtain alike. There was one of the company especially, I remember; he was a young man, and played second-walking gentleman's parts. He was a very quiet and rather melancholy young chap; quite unlike the rest. I never heard his history, but I think he had had great trouble some time. He went away the year *she* died, and I never heard of him since, though I should like to, for he was very kind to my poor 'Cissy'—very kind. Well, sir, it came all on a sudden like, about a week after the run of the pantomime. It had been a bit too much for her, and we were going to give her a change of air and a rest, when she fell into a low kind of fever, sir. Oh! it was a terrible bad thing. She was so restless and troubled, and couldn't sleep. The poor young chap I mentioned was quite 'cut up' like about it, and used to come a'most every day to see her. One day, after he'd been sitting with her, he took me aside and said, quite mournful like, 'It's killing her, Jones; I know it is.' He squeezed my hand very tight, but he said no more. He was such a curious chap though; he took away my rest that night. At last she got worse and worse, and either I, or the missus, or the young chap, was always with her. She bore her pain very, very well, and sometimes she would fall into a troubled sleep; and then, when she awoke, she'd tell us how she'd been far away somewhere, where she felt no pain nor heat, where she felt cool breezes blowing round her, and saw bright lights and beautiful forms; and sometimes, when she suffered very much, she would say, so quietly, yet very earnestly, 'Will the good little fairies never come and take me away from this pain, mother?' We'd soothe her as best we could, and that young chap he never used to say anything, but he'd sit for hours by her, merely looking at her, and somehow, she seemed calmer like when he was by. At last, one day we were all three by her side, and she was in a very troubled sleep, and the young chap, he held one of her hands, and never took his eyes off her. Presently she began to murmur lowly, but distinctly, 'They're coming now—see!—all!—so many of them; and they seem to go such a long way, all in rows, all bright; and they smile and sing.—The pain seems easier now.—Are they coming to take me now?—Yes, they're

coming nearer, closer, and they smile so kindly.—They will'—then her breathing seemed to come very hard awhile, and then it grew quieter. The young chap never moved, never spoke. Presently he let her hand fall upon the coverlet; then he turned his eyes mournfully to me. 'My poor friend! she has received her last "call." It is better as it is. She has played her part well. *She* is *sure* of a good reception.' He stooped, kissed her forehead, and then he rose and left the room. I have never seen him since. The poor missus was terribly cut up, and I felt so numbed and bewildered like, I could hardly do the work which must be done, or we should starve. We got at last to be reconciled to our loss, and we've lived ever since alone. We never had another child. We're both old, now, sir, and soon we shall have done our poor parts, and receive the last 'call,' too. The nearer that time comes, and always when we have trouble, and when the times are hard (and they often are now, sir, for my poor old hands won't work now as they used to), at all such times of grief and sorrow, it does us both good (the old missus and me, sir) to recall the fading past, and think of the 'little one' who's been 'Called on, in front.'"

(*By permission of the Author.*)

MY LADY'S ORATORY.

H. T. CRAVEN.*

THE Baron of Grande Bretêche has started
  On a journey far away;
He had warn'd his lady ere they parted,
  That long might be his stay:—
And my lady wept, and was broken-hearted—
  (At least, so she was heard to say?)
And she begg'd, with her beautiful briny eye, he
Wouldn't make his expected return *sine die*,
  But his business try to abbreviate:—
His hand with an eloquent pressure she prest,
And button'd his doublet well over his chest,
  His hoarseness and cough to alleviate:—
But the Baron was haughty, and stern, and bold,
His manners when torridest, freezingly cold,
  So he sulkily mounted his prancer;
Then flung his lady a gruff adieu,
To her questions he only replied—"Pooh, pooh!"
  Or gave an evasive answer.

* Mr. Craven is the author of several charming little dramas, among which may be mentioned "Milky White," "Meg's Diversion," "The Chimney Corner."

The dunnest of clouds, a nightly spread
O'er the towers of Grande Bretêche await,
The owl's awake, and the hind's abed,
And 'tis just the hour of darkness and dread,
That romance readers might satiate ;
Yet a light from an oriel window's shed,
On its flick'ring gleam many words might be said—
That is, if one chose to expatiate.

Why glimmers that light at such an hour ?
It shines from my Lady Josephine's "bower"—
(Her boudoir upon the first storey :—)
Perchance disturb'd by a matron's care,
(The wind is gusty and roary !)
She has risen, an hour to pass in prayer,
In her little Oratory ;
And piously begs, in entreaty soft,
Some sweet little cherub, to sit up aloft
All night, to keep watch for the Baron, and waft
O'er his path, spells sanatory.

And surely that cherub of "poor Jack" has felt
That tears of the loving, compassion can melt,
Though pity were coated in mineral ;
And a wife's name hallows the am'rous sigh—
For the glances of love gleam pure from *her* eye,
(When the *husband*'s receiver-general !)
But here the muse, in vice too green,
To varnish a flaw with sophistical sheen,
Drops a tear as large as a haricot bean,
And owns that, although it might ha' been—
'Twas *not* so with Lady Josephine !—
She was—oh, shame—(no marvel, I ween,
That husbands suspicious men are all),
She was seated beside a cavalier,
Slim, good-looking, and rakish ;
And to her fond looks he replied with a leer,
Far—very far from mistakish :
He murmur'd a question, and she, a reply,
What the tongue didn't say was supplied by the eye,
When a sharp tap was heard at the chamber-door,
And the voice of the maid cried "Sir, fly ! fly !
"The governor's coming—he's here, close by—
"Get out of the window—(of fright I shall die !)
"And the garden wall may be clamber'd o'er."

(Rosalie, you'll infer, was of character doubtable—
In farces these *soubrettes* are un-do-without-able,
Saying shocking bold things in shocking shy grammar,
Apparently simple—but down as a hammer !

Are always of "missus's" secrets observant,
And an underplot act with the gentleman's servant
—But this is away from our story !)
The Baron was nearer than she had supposed,
As he entered the room, Lady Josephine close
The door of the Oratory.

Lady Josephine rush'd to her husband's arms—
But they didn't expand to receive her :
She vow'd his return had quell'd many alarms—
But 'twas plain he didn't believe her ;
For the "green-eyed monster" was "making meat,"
As Shakspeare has it, "on which to eat,"
And he glared at his wife, with a meaning stare,
Then scowl'd at the door, and said "*Some one's there !*"
My lady trembled, but thought, no doubt,
Her only chance was to brazen it out,
So look'd—as her maid might say—"bang in his eye,"
Stood *à la Pucelle*, and said "You lie
"Open to harsh conjecture ;
"One might almost fancy your grog had been strong,
"Or the moon's at full and your intellect wrong,
"To take such tomfoolery into your head—
"So *taisez-vous*, sir, and come to bed,
"I'll read you a curtain lecture !"

Now ladies' ruses are ever specious,
And this gush'd forth in a tone facetious,
With a bantering laugh in the course of it,
Might have stamp'd a comedy-actress's fame,
And ought to have smother'd the Baron with shame—
But he didn't see the force of it :—
So, drawing a sort of Gallic claymore,
With one glance of menace more, he
Advanc'd to the little oaken door
Of the stone-built Oratory ;
But stagger'd at seeing his wife so cool,
He suddenly thought "I shall look like a fool,
"And become a by-word in a story,
"If I find my lady is really *seule*,
"When I open the Oratory—"
So he sternly said, "To doubt I am loath :—
"You say that is empty, ma'am ?—*Take your oath !*"
And my lady a solemn oath she sware,
Which at that period was prevalent there,
Something like "S'elp me *pomme de terre !*"
Or, "So help me" and something that's short for *Robert :*
And here might have ended the marital breeze,
But somebody just then sneez'd a sneeze,
And it came from the quarter in question :—

O'er the Baron's brow there fell a shade,
As tho' some fiend to his thought had made
A horrible suggestion !
In truth he was an awful man,
Who stuck at nothing revenge could plan ;
If it plann'd a murder, by Jove he'd mean it,
'Twas *Manus facit* if *Caput invenit ;*
A little talker, but monstrous doer,
Who wouldn't scruple, to make them fewer,
His foes somehow to kill off ;
For, though to appearance phlegmatic and cold,
When his blood wax'd hot, he was murd'rously bold—
And it certainly *now* had the chill off !

As a key in the Oratory door,
The fiend appear'd and said " Lock it !"
So he gave it a turn—then one turn more,
And popp'd the key in his pocket ;
Then a minion lacquey he summon'd straight,
And whisper'd some mandate of moment and weight,
Which sent him off *instanter ;*
In his large arm-chair he silently sate,
And took out a spirit decanter :—
" Hot water !" No signs of going to bed ;
He's preparing to make a night of it,
And morning breaks all rosy and red—
Perhaps he enjoy'd the sight of it ;
He didn't express it, for nought he said,
Perhaps he was in the right of it !

The sun in the east its glory rear'd,
And the trusty vassal again appear'd :—
He whisper'd " *Paul, the mason's here !*"
The whisper reach'd my lady's ear,
Who fainted—the Baron caught her !
'Twas just a performance of which he approved,
For she couldn't resist, so he had her removed
And secured in a distant quarter ;
Then sipping his grog, with the calmest face on,
He said to the lacquey " Shew up this mason,
" And bring me some more hot water."

In the doorway the man of stone is seen,
Bobbing his head like a mandarin ;
For all had a wholesome fear of my lord,
Who pointing the Oratory t'ord,
Said " That little recess in the wall is a bore,
" The smell on't is rank and I've lock'd the door.
" I've sworn that it shan't be re-opened to mortal :—
" There are stones in the yard—quickly wall up that portal :—

" I was going to add something funny—what was it?
" Oh—*a skeleton ev'ry man keeps in his closet!*
" Tut, man, don't look scared—'tis but this I determine—
" That hole's of no use but to harbour the vermin;
" Go at it, and briskly, for this you've to say for't—
" If the governor's a whim, he is willing to pay for't."

The mason at once at work began,
As much as to hint "Zounds, I'm your man!"
Chisel, and chisel, and chip,
Chip and chisel and plaster;
The Baron does little but hot grog sip,
And urge him to work still faster:—
The mason toils till the sinking sun,
The last stone's fixt—the job is done!
And the Baron thought "Now, I have him snug,
" As the poet has said 'as a bug in a rug!'"

Some weeks glided by, fast as any before 'em,
Still my lord made this chamber his *sanctum sanctorum*,
He never was absent—he ate, drank, and slept in it,
Had his shaving materials, *et cetera*, kept in it.
Though the chances are great, he might shortly have tired in't,
But he had a short sickness, and shortly expired in't:—
Some said it was gout in his stomach and body—
Some, by accident, ars'nic had dropp'd in his toddy:
If so, we can't guess by what very ill luck, it
Came there, but however—my lord kick'd the bucket!

At the news Lady Josephine weeping fell,
A praying and cursing in turn all;
" Purgatorial pains, more than tongue can tell,
" His deed to my lover shall earn all;
" He's dead, and he's gone, and he's gone to—well
" 'Twas a deed that one might call infernal,
" To build up a place like a strong nut-shell,
" With a living man for a kernel!"

Rosalie, with fore-finger applied to her nose,
And an "up-to-snuff" wink, said "I knows what I knows!
" And I thinks—tho' my judgment, in course, isn't strongest,
" That bottled things keeps, ma'am, a precious deal longest,
" Come, banish your fright, ma'am,
" Our lover's all right, ma'am,
" So don't let them tears come, dear missus, to vex yer eyes;
" The gentleman's well, ma'am;
" No falsehood I tell, ma'am,
" And only a suff'ring from want of his exercise!"

" You must know, ma'am, my *nous* made me quickly discover,
" My bedroom was over the cell of your lover;

" While the mason was making a noise with his stone,
" I perform'd some freemasonry work of my own :—
" Tho' the flooring was thick, and I'd none to assist,
" I bored, like a brick, a hole wide as my fist,
" And through it, I've daily poked his food,
" All things relishing—all things good,
" Dainties boil'd, and grill'd, and stew'd,
" Wines, and ale, September brew'd :—
" And, to prove that he's well, when I push'd through the floor,
" His lunch'on this morning—he ask'd for more ! "

Then up jump'd my lady, in wildness of glee,
Made straight for the door, and upset Rosalie,
Shouted out to the vassals—" Come hither ! come aid, men !
" Here's a job to be done shall be very well paid, men :—
" Bring pokers and shovels—bring pick-axes, hammers,
" Bring crowbars, spits, table-legs, bedposts for rammers !
" Here, down with this wall, and the door that's behind, too ;
" When done, drink the cellar dry, if you've a mind to :—
" That's well ! put more steam on ; the stone soon will shatter ;
" Well done, lads ! Again ! Ah, still better—still batter !
" There, pull out that left block—that's right ; now the others :—
" Now to work at the portal—I love ye, like brothers !
" It gives ! force the lock—bring your crowbars to bear !
" 'Tis done—it is open ! My own—lud ! who's there ? "

My lady's *ami* when he enter'd was slender :—
What an increase of weight does this stone-preserve send her !
Your Lamberts and Claimants to talk of, O cease, man ;
There was never seen such a mammoth obese man !
A martyrdom surely he suffer'd at first with it,
For his bulk was compress'd 'till his pantaloons burst with it !
It was needful—so tightly his prison had pack'd him,
To pull down two sides of the place to extract him :—
Rosalie—though the joke for refinement won't note her—
Vow'd " he went in *a herring*, and came out *a bloater*."

To the lady he waddled—his touch, she with awe shuns,
Her love had all followed his proper proportions,
Some ladies hate dandies, and some dislike shabby men,
Some detest skeletons—*she* abhorr'd flabby men ;
Suffice it—she cut him !—and he, full of spleen,
Went home, and soon died—mark—of sheer *want of lean !*

THE MORAL :—Be sure, tho' some villains wax wealthy,
That the fat fed by oil-cake of Vice is unhealthy.

(*By permission of the Author.*)

A TWILIGHT TALE.

"OUIDA."

THE winter was very dull. My father's forbiddance had taken from me many of my old pleasures ; and the failure of funds had arrested all continuance of my education. There was only Ambrogio Rufi to whom I still went, and in whose attic I was solaced by the strains of Cherubini, and the melodies of Gluck.

It was bitterly cold there.

The snow was thick on the roof, and the wind from the mountains poured through and through the unprotected place. The old man could afford no such luxury as a stove ; and the bare brick floor was like ice to the feet. I used to shiver as I sang.

And yet, when I think of the sweet sigh of the violin melodies through the winter silence ; of Raffaelino's eager, dreamy eyes, misty with the student's unutterable sadness and delight ; of old Ambrogio, with his semicircle of children round him, lifting their fresh voices at his word ; of the little robin that came every day upon the waterpipe, and listened, and trilled in harmony, and ate joyfully the crumbs which the old maestro daily spared to it from his scanty meal—when I think of those hours, it seems to me that they must have been happiness too.

"Could we but know when we are happy !" sighs some poet. As well might he write, "Could we but set the dewdrop with our diamonds, could we but stay the rainbow in our skies."

During this sad time of privation, I saw a little way into the closed past of my old music-master.

Verona perceived nothing in him but a meagre old man, who took his toilsome way noon and night to the theatre ; who chaffered in the market for a pinch of charcoal and a bit of goat's milk cheese ; who wore his clothes so long that they fairly dropped asunder ; and who made their boys and girls cry bitterly at many a sharp word and blow of his fiddle-bow, when they sung not to his liking.

But I had always felt, or fancied—fancy is so much feeling with every child—that there was something sadder, wiser, nobler, in Ambrogio, than the townsfolk credited.

Perhaps he liked me better than he did the others, or he liked my voice better ; all human creatures were only counted as so many voices by him ; at any rate, he now and then let fall, in my hearing only, brief sentences, which seemed to me born of a mind higher than most of those with which I came in daily contact.

Mariuccia would not listen to any idea of the kind. She was a little jealous of my regard for him.

"Those music-mad people," she would say, "are just like that big sea-shell the dear lads brought me from Genoa. The sea-shell sings all day long if you put it to your ear. Why does it sing? Just because it is empty. Just because the heart that

used to beat in it is dead and gone. It is just so with them. They are all melody because everything else born in them is withered up—che-e-e."

One night, as it grew dark, I ventured, contrary to usage, to go and see my old maestro.

I was dissatisfied with my tiresome fate; I was ill at ease and impatient; I wanted I knew not very well what.

I climbed up the dark staircase, and found him in his chamber.

It was a night when there was no performance at the theatre of which he was one of the orchestra. He sat alone in the cheerless, fireless attic, scanning some old scores by the light of a miserable little oil lamp.

He looked up as I entered; I think that he was always glad to see me, though he said nothing in welcome at any time.

"It is late for you to be out," was all his greeting.

I told him the Ave Maria had only just then rung; and asked him to explain again some obscure instruction in counterpoint, which had been hard for me at his last lesson.

He went through and through the passage lucidly with me; he was always willing to smooth difficulties to a patient student, and in music I had patience, though in nothing else.

When the point was so clear to me that I had no longer excuse to linger over it, I still loitered by him, sitting there at the old bare table, leaning my elbows on it, and my face on my hands, and gazing at the red, dull wick of the ill-fed lamp.

"Talk to me a little, maestro," I said, suddenly.

Ambrogio took off his spectacles slowly, and gazed at me in stupefaction.

"Talk!" he echoed; it never happened to him to be asked for words; such things as he had it in him to say he said through the strings of his violin.

"Yes! talk," I repeated, with the insistance of a spoilt child,—for poor Mariuccia had spoiled me sadly, despite all her warnings. "You must have seen the world sometime. Tell me a little about it."

"The world!"

He said the words with a startled, heavy breath. He looked like one who hears the long unuttered name of some dead thing.

"Yes. The world," I said again. "What is it like?"

"Go in a convent, and never know," he answered, with a bitter brevity.

"Is it so bad, then?"

He looked at me across the deal table in the dull, yellow lamplight; a dreary, grey, shrunken figure, very old, very poor, very hopeless, with his great hollow eyes burning bright with the fires of awakening memories.

"Bad? Good? Pshaw! Those are phrases. No one uses them but fools. You have seen the monkey's cage in the beast-garden here. That is the world. It is not strength or merit, or talent or reason, that is of any use there; it is just which

monkey has the skill to squeeze to the front and jabber through the bars, and make his teeth meet in his neighbours' tails till they shriek, and leave him free passage—it is that monkey which gets all the cakes and the nuts of the folk on a feast-day. The monkey is not bad; it is only a little quicker and more cunning than the rest ; that is all."

I sat silent ; it seemed to me but a dreary prospect, this monkeys' cage, which I should be doomed to enter when once I should cross the mountain.

"Tell me a little more," I urged to him. "You must have seen so much when you were young."

"No," he answered me. "I never saw very much. The man who is poor can only look out of a garret window. He sees the skies, and the sun, and the moon, and the changes of the clouds better than anyone else ; but it is all he does see."

"But he can walk abroad ? "

"Can he ? Shoe-leather costs money, and though bare feet might safely tread the sands of deserts in the days of saints, they go but ill upon the flints of the king's highways—now."

This I felt was true ; indeed, I knew it, by many a painful moment, when my little worn-out shoes had clic-clacked sorrowfully over the scorching stones of Verona, in midsummer.

I grew cold with a sort of sickly fear of the new world, into which, a second earlier, I had been all eagerness to plunge.

"But you must have seen so much to what I have seen," I urged, after a pause, again with a child's persistency. "Do tell me something—some story, I mean, of your old life ? "

His eyes were full of pain beneath his shaggy brows, as they met mine across the dim light.

"Child, you should never open dead men's graves," he said, drearily, with a sort of shudder. "I tell you I was always poor. It is a kind of blindness—poverty. We can only grope through life, when we are poor, hitting and maiming ourselves against every angle."

"But you had genius ? "

He shrugged his shoulders in a pathetic, hopeless jesture of resignation, that went to my heart through all my thoughtless selfishness.

"I have been most unhappy," he answered, simply. "Yes ; you are right."

I felt that I knew his meaning, vaguely though his words shadowed it.

"And how then," I said, under my breath. "How then—not great ? "

He smiled a little, very wearily.

"How ? Well, I loved Art, and not the world, and in my way, was honest. Time was, when I was young, that I dreamed a little of being, as you call it, great. At twenty-five, I was—yes even I—was happy.

"I was poor indeed; in winter I had to keep my bed lest I should die of cold, and in summer I was glad to dispute the acorns with the swine. But I was happy. I had my Art, and I had a friend closer than a brother.

"He was a German, Karl Rothwald: together we studied music at Milano. He had no strong talent, only a graceful taste. I—well, I had genius, God help me, and of the most arduous study I was never tired.

"At twenty-five, I trusted myself to commence my first great work—an opera upon the theme of Alkestis. I was two years engaged upon it. They were the two happy years of my life.

"Rothwald and I dwelt in the same chambers together; we walked abroad in the daybreak and evening times, and we sate up late into the nights, I all the while dreaming of Alkestis, and giving shape to the creations that haunted me, and calling on his sympathy and joy each time when my composition was good on my own ear, and satisfied my own desire. He never was fatigued, nor ever failed to rejoice with me.

"Often and often as we went through the millet-fields at sunrise, or sat in our garret through the long moonless nights, and the power of song that was in me broke forth and arose triumphant, and filled me with its own exultant strength; he —my friend—would laugh and weep in his boyish fashion, and fling his arms about my shoulders and cry out how beautiful and strong my music was, and prophesy I should rank with Bach and Gluck and Palestrina.

"Those two years I was quite happy—quite—though I was but a starving scholar, and had often to go without bread to be able to buy paper for my scores.

"All the world was full of hope and of beauty to me; everywhere I heard delicious melodies in leaves, and waters, and bells, and winds, and all the things that moved, and my friend was with me,—close as a brother,—dear almost as a mistress. I wanted nothing more, and was sure of fame.

"My opera was barely finished when Rothwald was summoned from my side; some illness in his northern home, he said.

"I begged him to return swiftly; I pledged my word to him not to submit my opera to the director of La Scala until he should return. 'My triumph would be robbed of half its joy, if thou wert not with me to rejoice in it;' so I spoke to him as we bade each other our farewell. It was then autumn.

"The delay was sad for me, for I had hoped to have seen the Alkestis produced that winter; but I never thought of putting it forward in his absence. I loved him only second to my work; and I had pledged him my word that he should be present whenever it should be given to the public.

"The first months of winter are bitter at Milano; they were very cheerless and desolate to me; but I had many tender letters from him to keep warm my heart, and I occupied myself

fondly in touching and refining the creation on which all my future hung.

"No one had ever heard a chord of it, except himself, but I had not much fear that it would not be accepted. At the Great Scala they knew me; and the conductor of orchestra, who was powerful with the direction, had a liking for me, because of my execution upon the violin.

"Rothwald had been gone four months; there were snow and ice in Milan; one day I sat shivering in my garret, yet with my heart warm still, because so much hope abode in it. The chief of orchestra paid me a visit; he was, as I say, good to me; I could not have maintained my life at all without the place he gave me amongst his musicians.

"He spoke to me of myself this day. 'Ambrogio,' he said, 'it seems to me that you have too much genius to sit behind my bâton all your life. I hear that you have attempted original composition. Is it true? Then let me see your score. It should be something great. You are a master of counterpoint.' He argued with me so kindly and so long, that in the end he prevailed, and I drew out my Alkestis, and bade him judge of it.

"'Alkestis? Alkestis?' he murmured, as he heard the name. 'Is that your theme? It is unfortunate. There is a new opera this very week produced in Vienna on that same old story.'

"I was pained to hear I had been forestalled; I asked him by whom it was composed.

"'Nay, that I forget, and am not sure if I have heard,' he answered me. 'But, anyway, you had best go thither and judge of it for yourself. If it be poor, and fail, you can still produce yours; but if a triumph, as I am told, we must needs fit your music to some other narrative. Ah! I know how you love your first thought—your first poem—but still, we might manage to alter the libretto without much injury. Well, go you to Vienna—nay, nay, do not be so proud. Take my gold for the journey, and we will leave the matter as a debt to be paid me when La Scala first brings out your opera. Nay, do not argue. Go. You must, of necessity, judge your rival for yourself.'

"So I took his gold and went through the bleak white winter over the mountains at peril of my life.

"It was night when I reached Vienna.

"The gay city was all ablaze with light. I had travelled far and fast; I was exhausted. Nevertheless, before I changed my clothes, or broke my fast, I made my way to the opera house. There they played Alkestis.

"I paid my entrance-money, and went into the heat and glare, and stood and listened. The house was shaking with thunders of applause. When the clamour ceased, the music rose again—it was my own.

"Phrase after phrase, chorus on chorus, solo and septuor and

recitative, I heard them all like one made stupid by a blow. They were all mine.

"The curtain fell; the rapture of the people cried aloud. 'Rothwald! Rothwald! Rothwald!'

"Then I understood.

"I fell like a stone; so they say; they took me up as dead.

"He had stolen it all—all—all: stored up in his notes and his copied score.

"It made him a great name. You may hear of him now in the world. He has done nothing great since; the world wonders; but it is possible to stretch one triumph over a lifetime so that it covers every after-failure. To make a name is hard; but once made, to live on it is easy.

"As for me—I say—I was dead. My heart, my brain, my genius were all killed. It is only my body that has dragged on life ever since.

"I never denounced him—no. For I had loved him. And if I had denounced him, where had been my proof? None would have been found to believe."

As the last words died on his lips, his head sunk on his chest; a film overspread the weariness of his hollow eyes; the silence of the innumerable years that he had passed, mute and alone, amidst his kind, stole afresh over him.

In vain I knelt before him; in vain I caressed his withered hands; in vain I spoke to him, begging his forgiveness for my thoughtless cruelty which had thus torn open rudely this deadly wound so long concealed from every human glance.

In vain: he answered nothing; he heard nothing; his dulled eyes only gazed at the gleam of the lamp; his hands only moved vaguely as though straying over the chords of some half-remembered music; his lips only muttered now and then under their breath:

"He betrayed me; yes; he stole all—all—all. But could I denounce him? He had been my friend."

And this he said again; and again, and again, many times; not knowing rightly what he said; and murmuring between whiles softly to himself sweet broken snatches of sad melodies—the melodies, doubtless, of his lost Alkestis.

I stole away, awed and afraid, for I was but a child, and went out into the flood of moonlight into the bath of cold and luminous air, and there in the streets I sat down and wept bitterly for a woe not my own—for a life that was ended.

On the morrow he did not seem to remember the confession he had poured out to me, nor ever again did any allusion to it pass his lips, or mine. But he had become sacred to me; every time that I stood before him I could have kissed his hands for very love and reverence and pity.

From that hour I loved and honoured, and never dared be wayward with. him.

He was only an old withered man, very bent and broken and poor, ill clad, and taking snuff with trembling hands in the bitter cold of his fireless attic; but to me from that night onward he was a hero and a martyr, and whilst he lived I never told to anyone what he had told me, not even to Raffaelino.

When a man's eyes meet yours, and his faith trusts you, and his heart, upon a vague impulse, is laid bare to you, it always has seemed to me the basest treachery the world can hold to pass the gold of confidence which he pours out to you from hand to hand as common coin for common circulation.

It was Mariuccia who had reared me in that manner of thinking.

"Child," she used to say, "if they gave a diamond in trust to your safe keeping, would you run with it to the goldsmiths' shops in the public streets? Well, is not human faith of more sanctity than diamonds?"

She thought so; being an old staunch Republican of Florence, and a woman very poor always, who knew little of the world or of its ways.

(*From* "PASCAREL," *by permission of* Messrs. CHATTO & WINDUS.)

LOVE'S LEGACY.

MALCOLM C. SALAMAN.

A POET once sang, and a woman heard,
And thought his song was the sweetest word
That had reached her hearing from man or bird.

The woman loved while his songs were new;
She had his soul, for he thought her true;
He gave love's roses—though she gave rue.

But the woman tired when his songs grew old,
And she knew each thought that his heart could hold;
Then she curled her lip, and her love turned cold.

Then another came, with no lover's fire,
And no glad song that could love inspire;
But worldly gifts to her heart's desire.

Still the poet sang—though she would not care;
He could love but once—though she made life bare;
For his soul was a song like a bird's in the air.

The worldly gifts faded, and left her life drear;
Then she prayed that the song once again she might hear;
But the poet had died, and bequeathed her a tear.

[*By permission of the Author, whose words have been set to music by* CHARLES SALAMAN, *and published by* Messrs. STANLEY, LUCAS & CO.]

TITMOUSE AND HIS HAIR-DYE.

Samuel Warren.

Titmouse, for the remainder of the day, felt, as may be imagined, but little at his ease; for, to say nothing of his insuperable repugnance to the discharge of any of his former duties; his uneasiness under the oppressive civilities of Mr. Tag-rag; and the evident disgust towards him entertained by his companions; many most important considerations arising out of recent and coming events—his altering circumstances—were momentarily forcing themselves upon his attention.

The first of these was his *hair;* for Heaven seemed to have suddenly given him the long-coveted means of changing its detested hue; and the next was *an eyeglass*, without which he had long felt his appearance and appointments to be painfully incomplete.

Early in the afternoon, therefore, on the readily admitted plea of important business, he obtained the permission of the obsequious Mr. Tag-rag to depart for the day; and instantly directed his steps to the well-known shop of a fashionable perfumer and perruquier in Bond Street—well known to those, at least, who were in the habit of glancing at the enticing advertisements in the newspapers.

Having watched through the window till the coast was clear, (for he felt a natural delicacy in asking for a hair-dye before people who could in an instant perceive his urgent occasion for it), he entered the shop, where a well-dressed gentleman was sitting behind the counter, reading.

He was handsome; and his elaborately curled hair was of a heavenly black (so at least Titmouse considered it) that was better than a thousand printed advertisements of the celebrated fluid which formed the chief commodity there vended.

Titmouse, with a little hesitation, asked this gentleman what was the price of their article "for turning *light* hair black?" and was answered, "Only seven and sixpence for the smaller-sized bottle."

One was in a twinkling placed upon the counter, where it lay like a miniature mummy, swathed, as it were, in manifold advertisements.

"You'll find the fullest directions within, and testimonials from the highest nobility to the wonderful efficacy of the 'CYANOCHAITANTHROPOPOION.'"*

"*Sure* it will do, sir?" inquired Titmouse anxiously.

* This fearful-looking word, I wish to inform my lady readers, is an original and monstrous amalgamation of three or four Greek words—*Kuanochaitanthropopoion*—denoting a fluid "*that can render the human hair black.*" Whenever a barber or perfumer determines on trying to puff off some villainous imposition of this sort, strange to say, he goes to some starving scholar, and gives him half-a-crown to coin a word like the above, that shall be equally unintelligible and unpronounceable, and therefore attractive and popular.

"Is *my* hair dark enough to your taste, sir?" said the gentleman, with a calm and bland manner; "because I owe it entirely to this invaluable specific."

"Do you indeed, sir?" inquired Titmouse; adding, with a sigh, "but between ourselves, look at mine!"—and, lifting off his hat for a moment, he exhibited a great crop of bushy, carroty hair.

"Whew! rather ugly that, sir!" exclaimed the gentleman, looking very serious—"What a curse it is to be born with such hair, isn't it?"

"'Pon my life I think so, sir," answered Titmouse mournfully; "and do you really say, sir, that this what's-its-name turned yours of that beautiful black?"

"Think? 'Pon my honour, sir—certain; no mistake, I assure you! I was fretting myself into my grave about the colour of my hair! Why, sir, there was a nobleman in here (I don't like to mention names) the other day with a head that seemed as if it had been dipped into water, and then powdered with brick dust; but—I assure you, the Cyanochaitanthropopoion was too much for it—it turned black in a very short time. You should have seen his lordship's ecstasy"—[the speaker saw that Titmouse would swallow anything; so he went on with a confident air]—"and in a month's time he had married a beautiful woman whom he had loved from a child, but who had vowed she could never bring herself to marry a man with such a head of hair."

"How long does it take to do all this, sir?" interrupted Titmouse eagerly, with a beating heart.

"Sometimes two—sometimes three days. In four days' time, I'll answer for it, your most intimate friend would not know you. My wife did not know me for a long while, and wouldn't let me salute her—ha, ha!"

Here another customer entered; and Titmouse, laying down the five-pound note he had squeezed out of Tag-rag, put the wonder-working phial into his pocket, and on receiving his change departed, bursting with eagerness to try the effects of the Cyanochaitanthropopoion.

Within half an hour's time he might have been seen driving a hard bargain with a pawnbroker for a massive-looking eyeglass, which, as it hung suspended in the window, he had for months cast a longing eye upon; and he eventually purchased it (his eyesight, I need hardly say, was perfect) for only fifteen shillings.

After taking a hearty dinner in a little dusky eating-house in Rupert Street, frequented by fashionable-looking foreigners, with splendid heads of curling hair and moustaches, he hastened home, eager to commence the grand experiment.

Fortunately, he was undisturbed that evening. Having lit his candle, and locked his door, with tremulous fingers he opened the papers enveloping the little phial; and glancing over their contents, got so inflamed with the numberless instances of its efficacy, detailed in brief but glowing terms—as the "Duke

of * * *—the Countess of * * *—the Earl of, etc., etc., etc., etc. —the lovely Miss ——, the celebrated Sir Little Bull's-eye (who was so gratified that he allowed his name to be used)—all of whom, from having hair of the reddest possible description, were now possessed of raven-hued locks,"—that he threw down the paper, and hurriedly got the cork out of the bottle.

Having turned up his coat-cuffs he commenced the application of the Cyanochaitanthropopoion, rubbing it into his hair, eyebrows and whiskers, with all the energy he was capable of, for upwards of half-an-hour. Then he read over again every syllable on the papers in which the phial had been wrapped; and about eleven o'clock, having given sundry curious glances at the glass, got into bed, full of exciting hopes and delightful anxieties concerning the success of the great experiment he was trying.

He could not sleep for several hours. He dreamed a rapturous dream—that he bowed to a gentleman with coal-black hair, whom he fancied he had seen before—and suddenly discovered that he was only looking at *himself* in the glass!!—This woke him.

Up he jumped—sprung to his glass breathlessly—but ah! merciful Heavens! he almost dropped down dead! His hair was perfectly *green*—there could be no mistake about it. He stood staring in the glass in speechless horror, his eyes and mouth distended to their utmost, for several minutes. Then he threw himself on the bed, and felt fainting.

Up he presently jumped again in a kind of ecstasy—rubbed his hair desperately and wildly about—again looked into the glass—there it was, rougher than before; but eyebrows, whiskers, and head—all were, if anything, of a more vivid and brilliant green.

Despair came over him. What had all his past troubles been to this?—what was to become of him? He got into bed again, and burst into a perspiration.

Two or three times he got into and out of bed, to look at himself again—on each occasion deriving only more terrible confirmation than before of the disaster that had befallen him.

After laying still for some minutes, he got out of bed, and, kneeling down, tried to say his prayers; but it was in vain—and he rose half choked.

It was plain he must have his head shaved, and wear a wig—that was making an old man of him at once. Getting more and more disturbed in his mind, he dressed himself, half determined on starting off to Bond Street, and breaking every pane of glass in the shop window of the cruel impostor who had sold him the liquid that had so frightfully disfigured him. As he stood thus irresolute, he heard the step of Mrs. Squallop approaching his door, and recollected that he had ordered her to bring up his tea-kettle about that time.

Having no time to take his clothes off, he thought the best

thing he could do would be to pop into bed again, draw his nightcap down to his ears and eyebrows, pretend to be asleep, and, turning his back towards the door, have a chance of escaping the observation of his landlady.

No sooner thought of than done. Into bed he jumped, and drew the clothes over him—not aware, however, that in his hurry he had left his legs, with boots and trousers on, exposed to view—an unusual spectacle to his landlady, who had, in fact, scarcely ever known him in bed at so late an hour before. He lay as still as a mouse.

Mrs. Squallop, after glancing with surprise at his legs, happening to direct her eyes towards the window, beheld a small phial, only half of whose dark contents were remaining—oh, gracious!—of course it must be POISON, and Mr. Titmouse must be dead!—In a sudden fright she dropped the kettle, plucked the clothes off the trembling Titmouse, and cried out:

"Oh, Mr. Titmouse! Mr. Titmouse! what *have* you been——"

"Well, ma'am, what the devil do you mean? How dare you——" commenced Titmouse, suddenly sitting up and looking furiously at Mrs. Squallop.

An inconceivably strange and horrid figure he looked. He had all his day clothes on; a white cotton nightcap was drawn down to his very eyes, like a man going to be hanged; his face was very pale, and his whiskers were of a bright green colour.

"Lard a-mighty!" exclaimed Mrs. Squallop, faintly, the moment that this strange apparition presented itself; and, sinking on a chair, she pointed with a dismayed air to the ominous-looking object standing on the window-shelf.

Titmouse from that supposed that she had found out the true state of the case.

"Well—*isn't* it an infernal shame, Mrs. Squallop?" said he, as, getting off the bed, and, plucking off his nightcap, exhibited the full extent of his misfortune. "What do you think of *that!*" he exclaimed, staring wildly at her.

Mrs. Squallop gave a faint shriek, turned her head aside, and motioned him away.

"I shall go mad—I SHALL!" cried Titmouse, tearing his green hair.

"Oh Lord!—Oh Lord!" groaned Mrs. Squallop, evidently expecting him to leap upon her.

Presently, however, she a little recovered her presence of mind; and Titmouse, stuttering with fury, explained to her what had taken place. As he went on, Mrs. Squallop became less and less able to control herself, and at length burst into a fit of convulsive laughter, and sat holding her hands to her fat shaking sides as if she would have tumbled off her chair.

Titmouse was almost on the point of striking her! At length, however, the fit went off; and, wiping her eyes, she expressed the greatest commiseration for him, and proposed to go down and

fetch up some soft soap and flannel, and try what "a good hearty wash would do."

Scarce sooner said than done—but, alas! in vain. Scrub, scrub—lather, lather, did they both; but, the instant the soap-suds were washed off, there was the head as green as ever!

"Oh, murder, murder! what *am* I to do, Mrs. Squallop?" groaned Titmouse, having taken another look at himself in the glass.

"Why—really I'd be off to a police-office, and have 'em all taken up, if as how I was *you!*" quoth Mrs. Squallop.

"No—see if I don't take that bottle, and make the fellow that sold it me swallow what's left—and I'll smash in his shop-front besides!!"

"Oh, you won't—you mustn't—not on no account. Stop at home a bit, and be quiet; it may go off with all this washing, in the course of the day. Soft soap is an uncommon strong thing for getting colours out—but—a—a—excuse me, Mr. Titmouse—why wasn't you satisfied with the hair God Almighty had given you? D'ye think He didn't know a deal better than you what was best for you? I'm blest if I don't think this is a judgment on you."

"What's the use of your standing preaching to me in this way, Mrs. Squallop?" said Titmouse, first with amazement, and then with fury in his manner—"Ain't I half mad without it? Judgment or no judgment—where's the harm of my wanting black hair any more than black trousers? That ain't *your own* hair, Mrs. Squallop—you're as grey as a badger underneath—'pon my soul! I've often remarked it."

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Himperance!" furiously exclaimed Mrs. Squallop, "you're a liar! And you deserve what you've got! It *is* a judgment, and I hope it will stick by you—so take *that* for your sauce, you vulgar fellow!" (Snapping her fingers at him.) "Get rid of your green hair if you can! It's only carrot *tops* instead of carrot *roots*—and some likes one, some the other—ha! ha! ha!"

"I'll tell you what, Mrs. Squ——" he commenced, but she had gone, having slammed-to the door behind her with all her force; and Titmouse was left alone in a half frantic state, in which he continued for nearly two hours.

Once again he read over the atrocious puffs which had overnight inflated him to such a degree, and he now saw that they were all lies. This is a sample of them:—

"This divine fluid (as it was enthusiastically styled to the inventor, by the lovely Duchess of Doodle), possesses the inestimable and astonishing quality of changing hair, of whatever colour, to a dazzling jet black; at the same time imparting to it a rich glossy appearance, which wonderfully contributes to the imposing *tout ensemble* presented by those who use it. That well-known ornament of the circle of fashion, the young and lovely Mrs.

Fitzfrippery, owned to the proprietor that to this surprising fluid it was that she was indebted for those unrivalled raven ringlets which attracted the eye of envying and admiring crowds," and so forth. A little further on:—"This exquisite effect is not *in all cases* produced instantaneously; much will of course depend (as the celebrated M. Dupuytren, of the Hotel Dieu, at Paris, informed the inventor), on the physical idiosyncrasy of the party using it, with reference to the constituent particles of the colouring matter constituting the fluid in the capillary vessels. Often a single application suffices to change the most hopeless-looking head of red hair to as deep a black; but, not unfrequently, the hair *passes through intermediate shades and tints*—all, however, ultimately settling into a deep and permanent black."

This passage not a little revived the drooping spirits of Titmouse. Accidentally, however, an asterisk at the last word in the above sentence directed his eye to a note at the bottom of the page, printed in such minute type as baffled any but the strongest sight and most determined eye to read, and which said note was the following:—

"Though cases *do*, undoubtedly, occasionally occur in which the native inherent indestructible qualities of the hair defy all attempts at change or even modification, and resist even *this* potent remedy: of which, however, in all his experience" (the wonderful specific has been invented for about *six months*) "the inventor has known but very few instances." But to this exceedingly select class of unfortunate incurables, poor Titmouse, alas! entertained a dismal suspicion that *he* belonged.

"Look, sir! Look! Only look here what your cursed stuff has done to my hair!" said Titmouse, on presenting himself soon after to the gentleman who had sold him the infernal liquid; and, taking off his hat, exposed his green hair. The gentleman, however, did not appear at all surprised, or discomposed.

"Ah—yes! I see—I see. You're in the intermediate stage. It differs in different people——"

"Differs, sir! I'm going mad! I look like a green monkey —Cuss me if I don't!"

"In *me*, now, the colour was a strong *yellow*. But, have you read the explanations that are given in the wrapper?"

"Read 'em?" echoed Titmouse furiously—"I should think so! Much good they do *me!* Sir, you're a humbug!—an impostor! I'm a sight to be seen for the rest of my life! Look at me, sir! Eyebrows, whiskers, and all!"

"*Rather* a singular appearance, just at present, I must own," said the gentleman, his face turning suddenly red all over with the violent effort he was making to prevent an explosion of laughter. He soon, however, recovered himself, and added coolly—"If you'll only persevere——"

"Persevere be d——d!" interrupted Titmouse, violently clap-

ping his hat on his head. "I'll teach you to *persevere* in taking in the public! I'll have a warrant out against you in no time!"

"Oh, my dear sir, I'm accustomed to all this!" said the gentleman coolly.

"The—devil—you—are!" gasped Titmouse, quite aghast.

"Oh, often—often, while the liquid is performing the first stage of the change; but, in a day or two afterwards, the parties generally come back smiling into my shop, with heads as black as crows!"

"No! But really—do they, sir?" interrupted Titmouse, drawing a long breath.

"Hundreds, I may say thousands, my dear sir! And one lady gave me a picture of herself, in her black hair, to make up for her abuse of me when it was in a puce colour—Fact, honour!"

"But do you recollect anyone's hair turning *green*, and then getting black?" inquired Titmouse with trembling anxiety.

"Recollect any? Fifty, at least. For instance, there was Lord Albert Addlehead—but why should I name names? I know hundreds! But everything is honour and confidential *here!*"

"And did lord what's-his-name's hair go green, and then black; and was it at first as light as mine?"

"His hair was redder, and in consequence it became greener, and now is blacker than ever yours will be."

"Well, if I and my landlady have this morning used an ounce, we've used a quarter of a pound of soft soap——"

"Soft soap!—soft soap!" cried out the gentleman, with an air of sudden alarm—"That explains all" (he forgot how well it had been already explained by him). "By Heavens, sir!—soft soap! You may have ruined your hair for ever!" Titmouse opened his eyes and mouth with a start of terror, it not occurring to his reflecting mind that the intolerable green had preceded and caused, not followed, the use of the soft soap. "Go home, my dear sir! God bless you—go home, as you value your hair; take this small bottle of DAMASCUS CREAM, and rub it in before it's too late; and then use the remainder of the——"

"Then you don't think it's already too late?" inquired Titmouse faintly; and having been assured to the contrary—having asked the price of the Damascus Cream, which was "*only* three-and-sixpence" (stamp included), he paid it with a rueful air, and took his departure.

He sneaked along the streets with the air of a pickpocket, fearful that every one he met was an officer who had his eye on him. He was not, in fact, very far off the mark; for many a person smiled, and stared, and turned round to look at him as he went along.

(*From "Ten Thousand a Year."*)

A LAMENT FOR ROMANCE.

WALTER PARKE.

O, FOR the days, the golden days,
  Before the world was worldly-wise!
When minstrels sang chivalric lays
  Of doughty deeds of high emprise;
When knight with knight in tourney fought,
  Each battling for his ladye's sake,
Or scour'd the burning East, and sought
  The power of "fierce Mahound" to break;
And have such days for ever fled?
Alas! alas! Romance is dead!

Now war's a scientific game,
  Fought by machines instead of men,
With guns of telescopic aim,
  At enemies beyond our ken;
Trains, and not knights, are "armour'd" now,
  Past is the stately turban'd Turk,
With flowing robe and haughty brow,
  And jewell'd scimitar and dirk;
The pall of commonplace is spread
O'er every land: Romance is dead!

The East is Occidentalized
  By railroads, tramways, and hotels,
The picturesque is little prized
  Wherever modern Progress dwells;
The conquering Mussulman of yore
  Has fallen from his pride of place,
No war or treaty can restore
  The glory of his waning race;
No more the Crescent blazes red,
'Tis pale and faint: Romance is dead!

We've "knights"—grown rich by city trade,
  "Esquires"—plebeian Jones and Smith,
We've "crests"—on envelopes display'd,
  We've "helmets"—made of felt or pith;
We've "tournaments"—of slaughtered doves;
  "Champions" in sporting circles known;
We've "gauntlets"—ladies' fancy gloves;
  All's changed, except the names alone,
A very slight connecting thread
With loftier things: Romance is dead!

Now travelling is an easy task,
  No hair-breadth 'scapes or deadly strife,
No Claude Duval, in cloak and mask,
  Demands "your money or your life!"

You loll within your Pullman car,
  As safe as in your own abode,
The train whirls on, outstripping far
  The wild adventure of "the Road";
'Tis but in "penny dreadfuls" read,
  ('Twere well if *that* Romance were dead!)

The land of Wallace, Scott, and Burns,
  The scenes that charm'd Childe Harold's eyes
Are "shows" which every tourist learns
  In flippant terms to criticise;
Monastic pile and palace proud,
  And castled home of pomp and power,
Are now but playgrounds, where the crowd
  May while away an idle hour;
The dwindling gipsies are, 'tis said,
Degenerate rogues;—Romance is dead!

The "noble Red man" to the hearts
  Of Longfellow and Cooper dear,
Unless he turn to peaceful arts,
  Is doom'd ere long to disappear;
No daring Rover sweeps the seas;
  Defies the law, and laughs at storms,
Few smugglers now are left, and these
  Disguised in most prosaic forms;
No modern youth can be misled
By gilded crime: Romance is dead!

It lingers in the storied page,
  The pictured scene, the lyric strain,
And in the mirror of the stage
  A few brief hours it breathes again;
With this we fain must be content,
  As, when a friend has passed away,
His portrait serves to represent
  The life that once inform'd the clay.
So weep not; memory lives to shed
Her solace, though Romance is dead!

(*By permission of the Author.*)

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF TOM HOOD.

Samuel Carter Hall.

"He wrote the Song of the Shirt!" The line almost suffices to consecrate a lofty memory. He wrote it out of his deep sympathy with suffering, and knowledge of the bitterness of the bread that is earned by ill-paid and ceaseless toil; for he was a

sufferer himself, almost from the cradle to the grave, and his always broken health was more completely shattered by need to be a slave of the pen—to be merry on paper when debts and difficulties were the spectres that haunted his every hour—to concoct jokes for the benefit of his readers in the intervals of release from bodily pain. Such a struggle was not likely to continue till "threescore and ten:" it brought Hood to the grave at the age of forty-six.

When I saw him first he was in his prime; when I saw him last he was on his death-bed; yet his dauntless propensity for jesting was even then paramount. I do not know that it was so much inbred as that use had become second nature. But his wife herself told me of the well-known joke he made when she had been preparing a mustard poultice to place upon his chest. He pointed to his emaciated frame and said, "Dear me, Fanny, that's a monstrous deal of mustard to a very little meat." Yes! flashes of merriment broke forth frequently when he was enduring physical pain and mental anguish. And we find him a sad and touching picture!—dictating from his dying bed matter for the printer which he had not strength to write; while, as long as the wasted fingers could grasp it, his pencil was also active; one of his latest engraved drawings for his Magazine (which unhappily was "Hood's Own," and brought no return) taking the shape of the "Editor's Apologies," a plate of leeches, a cup of gruel, a blister, and three labelled vials. A few months later—for his struggle with death was long and painful—he made the famous remark: "I am so near death's door I can almost fancy I can hear the creaking of the hinges." Very painful must that neighbourhood have been to him; for, although the sunshine of celebrity was tardily beginning to brighten his path, he found little that was golden in its beams. Happily his last days were lightened and cheered by a pension granted to him by Sir Robert Peel. Honoured be the memory of that great statesman and good man! It is one of many acts for which he is now receiving his reward; perhaps in the company of the dying poet to whose death-bed he bade Comfort go and drive away Despondency—not Despair: Hood's was too brave a spirit for that; but in passing away from wife and children, and leaving them heirs only to the poverty they had shared with him, he might well despond. No more kindly and timely aid was ever tendered, even by Sir Robert Peel.

In acknowledging that debt, he could not resist a pun. "Given over by physicians and myself . . . . it is death," he wrote, "that stops my pen, you see, and not my pension." He added: "God bless you, sir, and prosper all your measures for the benefit of my beloved country." And so, almost before fame had found the poet, Death came for him.

His admirable wife, the ministering spirit who watched over his death-bed, did not survive him many months. His son, the

younger Tom, died when in early manhood (having established a reputation inferior, it is true, to that of his father, but yet which that father would have learned of with pride); and his daughter, Fanny Broderip, is also dead. She left three daughters (to one of whom Mrs. Hall and I were god-parents). To the wife and the daughter the pension was continued; the grand-daughters do not need it, ample provision having been made for their future by the will of one of the brothers of the Rev. Mr. Broderip, the husband of Fanny Hood.

Obviously, I could treat this sad, yet happy theme at much greater length; but the space to which I am limited enjoins compression. I will content myself with copying a brief poem that, according to Lysons, was inscribed on the pedestal of a bust of Comus in Old Brandenburg House, and that seems to come in very aptly in writing of Hood:—

"Come, every muse, without restraint,
Let genius prompt and fancy paint;
Let wit and mirth, and friendly strife
Chase the dull gloom that saddens life.
True wit that, firm to Virtue's cause,
Respects religion and the laws;
True mirth that cheerfulness supplies
To modest ears and decent eyes."

His was slow wit; it was neither spontaneous nor ready—the offspring of thought rather than an instinctive sparkle; but it was always kindly, gracious, sympathetic; never coarse, never "free," never even caustic, neither tainted with distrust of the goodness of God, nor to rail at the ingratitude of man. His countenance had more of melancholy than of mirth; it was calm even to solemnity. There was seldom any conscious attempt at brilliancy in his talk; and so far from sharing in that weakness with which wits are generally credited, a desire to monopolise the conversation, he seemed ever ready in society to give way to any who would supply talk.

No, not a mere jester was Thomas Hood. He made humanity his debtor, to remain so as long as there are men and women with hearts to feel and understand the lessons he taught. He was the poet of the poor,—above all of the poor who are women, and whose sufferings seem perpetual. Alas!—

"Oh, God! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap!"

remains a cry of as fearful meaning as when "He sang the Song of the Shirt" supplied an epitaph for the monument placed over his grave at Kensal Green.

He entered into his rest, the rest that does not imply indolence or idleness, but release from the burdens of the flesh. freedom from temptations, bodily needs, despondencies, and

dreads, and, with all this, a continuance of work in a holier sphere,—on the 3rd of May, 1845. "Weary and heavy-laden" all his life, he found "life in death;" and his last words (I quote them from a letter written to me by his daughter), "breathed painfully but slowly," were these, "O Lord! say arise, take up thy cross and follow me!"

(*From* "A RETROSPECT OF A LONG LIFE," *by permission of* Messrs. R. BENTLEY & SON.)

RURAL SIMPLICITY.

HENRY J. BYRON.

SAID I, Oh, give me simplicity,
Purity, truthful rurality:
Wearied, alas! I'm of this city,
With its deceit and venality.
Give me a home amidst villagers,
Noted for honest veracity,
Far from this town full of pillagers,
Reckless in daring audacity.

Long 'twas before the discovery
Came of the spot I was wishing for:
There in my cottage ("The Dovery")
Trout though diurnally fishing for,
Fish never ventured a bite at all;
Though the inhabitants said they would,
Never appeared to my sight at all;
"P'rhaps if I threw in some bread they would."

Roger, a humble parishioner,
Noted for cringing humility,
For the groom's place a petitioner,
Robbed me with wondrous ability:
Jane, thought a girl of sobriety,
Praised by our excellent Vicar, and
Timothy, noted for piety,
Took my loose cash and my liquor, and

Though I induced was to pardon her,
Soon I regretted my lenity,
For she eloped with the gardener;
This quite upset my serenity.
Still I had faith in simplicity;
Giles, too, the pride of the peasantry,
Till I found out that a visit he
Paid to the eggs in the pheasantry.

Then I'd a Bailiff, a denizen,
Native of where I had settled at :
Mutton *I* ate, *he* ate venison,
Which I must own I was nettled at.
I kept a small modest vinery,
He, in a manner Quixotical,
Went in for peaches and pinery,
Plants too most rare and exotical.
Famed were his wines and his cookery,
Famed too his wide hospitality ;
My house was rather a rookery
Since I'd gone in for "Rurality."
Though for the fields I'd selected a
Party of pipers and taborers
Picturesque, still I'd expected a
Lot who were decentish labourers.
"Sing?" yes, they sung, but their ditties were
Not to be lauded extensively :
Songs I have heard howled in cities were
Seldom couched *quite* so offensively.
"Dance?" yes, they danced, but proclivities
Which have been censured quite recently,
During the gloaming's festivities,
Peasants developed indecently.
Shocked at this base immorality,
Sickened with Chloes and Phyllises,
Welcome's the modest formality
At a big ball,—say, at "Willis's."
Tytyrus? Corydon?—Bosh!
Pretty in print, but reality
Proves that the *print* doesn't wash,
Being inferior quality.
Give me this city of crime
Seething with vile illegality,
Rather than passing my time
Searching for "Simple Rurality."
(*From* "MIRTH," *edited by the late* H. J. BYRON.)

THE MAN WITHOUT A MORROW.

GEORGE R. SIMS.

THE water did look disgustingly cold!

There was hardly a soul on the Embankment, and if I once jumped in, my chance of being pulled out again was excessively remote. But there! what was the use of thinking the matter over? I'd made up my mind to end my miseries as quietly and decently as possible, and the sooner I got the preliminaries over

the better. If you are inquisitive enough to inquire why I wanted to commit suicide, I'm sorry I can't gratify your very legitimate curiosity. I didn't know myself then, and I've never quite found out since.

Money was scarce, friends were unkind, town was dull, I was out of sorts, and an unsuccessful author. Smith said my verse was vapid jingle, Jones said my prose was slipshod bosh. Everything was as wrong as wrong could be, and I'd just found out that I couldn't be a famous writer in three weeks. I suppose all these things, acting on a badly-balanced brain, had something to do with it; but the only thing about which I am positive is, that at five o'clock one July morning I was on the parapet of the Thames Embankment, waiting to drop into the river.

The longer I looked at the water the less I liked it. Not only did it look uninvitingly cold, but it was dirty—and it smelt.

The uneasy spirits of dogs and cats prompted their inanimate carcases to revisit the surface, and there was a look about them that did not tempt a closer acquaintance. I wondered what I should look like when I came to the top, after a couple of days in the mud. I put my hands into my pockets to think the matter calmly out. The fingers of my right hand came in contact with a hard metallic substance, round in shape, and smooth to the touch; I drew it gently forth, and gazed at it with astonishment. It was a sovereign—a whole sovereign! I'd actually been contemplating suicide with a pound in my pocket! At least, I would spend that first. Nobody should be twenty shillings the better for my untimely end.

At this moment Big Ben struck six; signs of life became apparent in the streets and on the water. My chance for a quiet plunge was over, and I had a fresh object in life. From six to midnight was eighteen hours. I would postpone my little experiment for that period, spend a happy day and my sovereign, and drop off Westminster Bridge as the clock struck twelve. Besides, the darkness was much more suitable to the deed than the garish light of day. You see, I went about the business methodically; I was a prey to no violent emotions. No thought of the wickedness of my intended deed ever entered my brain. I was simply in that state of mind in which there is a general petrification of the senses round one object. I had made up my mind to die, as I should have made up my mind to buy a penny bun. I am not a psychologist, and I cannot account for my extraordinary mental condition. I know that when I had settled on a postponement, life to me was a period of eighteen hours, and I determined to jog comfortably to its limit, as a weary traveller strolls quietly towards the inn which is to shelter him for the night.

With a careless air, that was not in the least assumed, I sauntered off the Embankment, and entered a coffee-house in the Strand. The morning air had sharpened my appetite, and

I dispatched a dish of ham and eggs, with rather more celerity than is becoming to a man who breakfasts for the last time. When I had finished my meal, instinctively I picked up a newspaper and commenced to read. I skimmed the leaders, glanced, from habit, down the theatrical advertisements, and allowed my attention to be riveted by a trial for murder, which was then progressing. Eagerly I followed every question of counsel, every answer of the witnesses. At the bottom of the report I found that the case was likely to last several days. I flung down the paper in disgust. The trial had lost all interest for me, because I could never know how it would end. Then, for the first time, I appreciated my peculiar position. I was a man *without a morrow.*

To the first twinge of annoyance succeeded a feeling of novel enjoyment. There was something so delightfully fresh and romantic about the situation. I had a day to do what I liked in, totally independent of all after-consequences. I paid for my breakfast, and, lighting a cigar, strolled into the street to meditate upon the programme for the day. Should I go into the country or wander about London? I was a cockney born and bred, and, true to the instincts of my race, I determined to consecrate my last hours to pavements and shop-fronts. The roar and rattle of the streets, the hustle and bustle of the surging crowd, and all the dash and confusion of London life, were more in harmony with my present mood than the drowsy dulness and pulseless vegetation of the country. I wandered aimlessly through the great thoroughfares; I stared into the shop-windows; I stood at street corners, with old ladies who were waiting for busses. I went into public-houses, and drank with clerks and loafers at the bar. One thought was uppermost in my mind. I wondered what the thousands of people passing me by and jostling me with such unconcern would say if they knew that in a few hours I should be a dank and ghastly corpse.

I wondered whether any of them, when they read a description of "a body found in the Thames," would remember that they hustled such a person in Regent Street or the Strand on the previous day. It was on my tongue twenty times that morning, when someone's glance casually met mine, to say, "Look at me well —I'm an important person: I am going to commit suicide." I had half an idea that I ought to do something eccentric; that it was against the laws of nature for a man with one leg in the grave to stroll about the streets with his hands in his pockets and a cigar in his mouth. To tell the honest truth, I felt like a comic journalist, who sees people reading his witticisms from a paper in the shop-window, and longs to tap them on the shoulder and say, "I'm the author of that joke. What d'you think of it?" I felt it a positive injustice that the hero of a terrible tragedy should be passed by with such indifference. People might say "Poor fellow!" "How shocking!" and all that sort

of thing to-morrow, and it annoyed me to think that I couldn't discount their sympathy.

A little after two I made my way to a West-end restaurant, thinking that an early dinner would leave me a free evening, if I made up my mind to go to a place of amusement. The waiter brought me the bill of fare, and waited for my order. I read the bill carefully down, and for the first time in my life I realised the great variety of food in which a hungry man can indulge. Soups, fish, joints, *entrées*, pastry, cheese—what a choice! Now, on an ordinary occasion, if you say to a man, "What will you have?" he hasn't much trouble to decide. If he chooses mutton to-day he can have beef to-morrow, and pork the day after. With me it was different. This was my last dinner. Whatever I chose to-day I chose once and for ever. The waiter stood silent and grim as the mute he doubtless had often been. The agony of the two minutes during which I endeavoured to decide was supreme. I weighed the relative merits of beef and Yorkshire, mutton and mashed, and rump-steak pie, to a nicety. And still I hesitated to "give it a name." At last I flung the bill from me with a desperate effort, and in a trembling voice exclaimed, "Bring me whatever's in best cut." Evidently relieved that the silence was broken, the waiter darted at a pipe in the wall and blew a message up it. In two minutes he returned, and placed before me a plate of *something*. I was glad I left the choice to him then, for I never knew which joint I had tasted for the last time, and I was spared the pain of wishing it had been one of the others. To my intense relief, when it came to pastry, there was only currant and raspberry tart "on." Now, under ordinary circumstances, pastry has the effect of upsetting me for a week. Upon this occasion I consumed two portions, with the blessed knowledge that before it could make me ill I should be beyond its malign influence.

I have dwelt somewhat minutely on this question of choice, because throughout the whole day it was the one painful thing against which I had to contend. No matter whether it was where to go, what to do, or what to eat, the terrible fact remained, that whatever I decided upon, I bade good-bye to everything else of its kind for ever.

I spent the afternoon in Hyde Park, watching the tide of fashion flow through its broad arteries. I gazed at the gorgeously-attired dames, lolling in their elegant chariots, and the tightly-coated loose-trouser'd "swells," talking and smoking against the iron rails. Few of them, I thought, but are troubled about to-morrow. The men have creditors to avoid, bills to meet, and awkward love-affairs to settle; the women have milliners' bills to hide from their lords, home quarrels to renew, scandals to face, and undutiful children to weep over. Yes, for them, in spite of wealth and position, there was a morrow, and I could read in their faces how many of them dreaded it. But I—

I the outcast—sitting back and closing my eyes, I could hum the words of Donizetti's ballad with the appreciation of a disciple :—

Scherzo bevo e derido gl' insani
Che si dan del futuro pensier :
Non curiamo l' incerio domani,
Se quest' oggi ne è dato goder.

"Never care, then, what fate brings to-morrow." How could I; when every possible misfortune that might occur, would find me *non est?*

The monotonous rattle of the carriages, the rustling of the leaves, the soft air blowing in my face, and the warm sun, must have sent me to sleep, for a neighbouring clock striking seven brought me to my feet with a jump. Why, I had slept half the afternoon away!—wasted a portion of my last day! Suddenly I recollected that I had slept for the last time. I should have liked my slumber over again then, just to have known I was sleeping.

That dull dreamy sense of unconsciousness called dozing is one of the most ethereal pleasures of life—and I had slept a vulgar sleep. If I had only known what I was going to do, I would have kept myself awake, and dozed. When a man is within five hours of his grave, you cannot grumble at him for drawing nice distinctions.

I shook off the feeling of lethargy which sitting so long in the open air had produced, and walked rapidly out of the park into Oxford Street. I bought an evening newspaper, and read it in a coffee-shop, over a cup of tea and a cup of coffee. (The same painful difficulty of choosing presented itself here, so I had both.) Skimming the theatrical advertisements, the announcement of the last night of the Italian Opera Season at Drury Lane caught my attention. The opera to be performed was Wagner's "Lohengrin," with Nilsson as Elsa di Brabante, and Titiens as Ortruda. I was passionately fond of music, and familiar with the soft Italian tongue. I must pass my last evening somewhere, why not in listening to the glorious strains of the great German master? There was a grim appropriateness in a man with four hours to live listening to the music of the future. I had five shillings left out of my sovereign—two would buy me a seat in the gallery. The die was cast; my last night upon earth should be passed at the opera.

A fierce battle of fists and elbows procured me a front seat. My hat was considerably damaged in the conflict, but as I only required its services a few hours longer, that was immaterial. I invested eighteen-pence in a book of the words, and settled myself down to a thorough evening's enjoyment.

When the curtain rose the house was crammed; not a single box, and hardly a stall, was vacant. The splendour of the ladies' dresses, the sparkling of precious gems, the glittering of

the brilliant armour worn by the knights who crowded the stage, and the soul-stirring strains of the glorious music swelling through the thronged edifice—all this made up an *ensemble* intoxicating to every sense.

As I looked down from the giddy height upon the myriad heads below, and watched the audience listening silent and motionless to Wagner's weird romance, I was struck with an idea which, under similar circumstances, had often presented itself before. What would be the effect upon the house if, in the midst of some splendid dramatic situation, a man leapt suddenly from the gallery and fell with a crash to the ground?

I had often felt that terrible temptation to jump over which many people experience when looking down from a height.

To-night I would yield to that temptation.

Such a death, after all, would be preferable to sneaking into eternity through a dirty river. There would be a certain amount of *éclat* attached to a suicide committed to a Wagnerian accompaniment, and with such dramatic surroundings. The moment I had thoroughly digested the idea, I determined to act upon it. I turned to the libretto of the third act, and searched for a passage which would serve me as a signal to leap. I selected one immediately preceding the termination of the opera, because, as I should never enter a theatre again, I might as well have my money's worth. Like several other portions of the book, the passage I determined upon was printed in italics. Elsa has indulged in the fatal curiosity of asking her lord his name, and Lohengrin informs her that for this he must leave her for ever.

LOHENGRIN. The crime thou only dar'dst to perpetrate,
But I must share the punishment with thee;
Although we shall be separate,
Still shall each the other see.
[ELSA *falls with a shriek to the ground.*

I would do the same.

From the moment I had made up my mind, music and words became one monotonous buzz of sound. The curtain fell on the first act, rose again, and fell on the second. I never moved from my place; I never turned my head; my whole being was concentrated upon one idea.

When the third act commenced, I buttoned my coat tightly round me to prevent it catching against any projection. Immediately beneath me in the stalls were four vacant places, and I had calculated the manner in which I should leap to avoid injuring anyone below. The words immediately preceding those which were to terminate my career were:—

Mi manca il piede, pietoso ciel!
Ahimè, mi serpe in seno un gel!

"The ground is rocking; it is night! give aid to me un-

happy !" The final scene between Elsa and Lohengrin came at last, I clutched the railings firmly, and slightly raised myself in my seat. Every thought of the enormity of my act was banished by the wild excitement of the moment. The supreme second came at last. Nilsson, with her lovely fair hair floating over her shoulders, fell at Lohengrin's feet, and wailed, "Give aid to me unhappy !" Every nerve in my body twitched ; the blood ran through my veins like molten lead. I sprang up in my seat, and prepared to vault. "Sit down in front !" yelled the infuriated two-shilling critics behind ; but I heard them not. I waited for Lohengrin's speech and Elsa's shriek. They never came.

The king and the knights rushed forward and commenced the final chorus. I fell back in my seat, and turned hurriedly to the printed libretto. Then, for the first time, I noticed a foot-note :—

"*The passages printed in italics are omitted in representation.*"

* * * * * * *

A sudden revulsion of feeling following on the fearful tension of the last few minutes produced a sweeping change in my mental condition.

Heedless of the exclamations of the gods, I fought my way through them to the door, and staggered down the gallery stairs into the street.

The idiotcy and wickedness of my mad resolve came to me as a sudden inspiration, and instead of seeking the bed of the river, I went quietly home to my own.

I had come back to life by a "short cut," and I've never since had the least desire to leave it in a roundabout way.

(*By permission of the Author.*)

THE CHOIR INVISIBLE.

GEORGE ELIOT.

O MAY I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence : live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end in self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.

So to live is heaven :
To make undying music in the world,
Breathing as beauteous order that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man.

So we inherit that sweet purity
For which we struggled, failed, and agonized
With widening retrospect that bred despair.
Rebellious flesh that would not be subdued,
A vicious parent shaming still its child
Poor anxious penitence, is quick dissolved ;
Its discords, quenched by meeting harmonies,
Die in the large and charitable air.
And all our rarer, better, truer self,
That sobbed religiously in yearning song,
That watched to ease the burthen of the world.
Laboriously tracing what must be,
And what may yet be better—saw within
A worthier image for the sanctuary,
And shaped it forth before the multitude
Divinely human, raising worship so
To higher reverence more mixed with love—
That better self shall live till human time
Shall fold its eyelids, and the human sky
Be gathered like a scroll within the tomb
Unread for ever.
This is life to come,
Which martyred men have made more glorious
For us who strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardour, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty—
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense.
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

(*By permission of* Mr. C. L. Lewes.)

THE STORY OF A RUNAWAY.

Leopold Wagner.

I was born in a busy Yorkshire town, where my father was a well-to-do tradesman in the glass and china way. During my earliest boyhood I had indulged a genuine passion for the drama, fostered, doubtless, by the fact that we had in our family a playgoing relative, whom I regularly accompanied to the theatre. As I grew up, this propensity advanced with me, until nothing short of a theatrical career appeared at all consistent with my choice, whenever that might come to be consulted.

In my fifteenth year I was taken from school and placed in

my father's shop, to wait upon customers and bury my existence among crockery-ware—to my infinite disgust. My father was a great horse-racer. Consequently, I was tempted to utilise the abundant leisure and privacy which was at my disposal in devouring Shakespeare, and the getting by heart of sufficient elocutionary matter to stock a penny-reading from beginning to end. During the winter that followed, I enjoyed frequent opportunities of displaying my powers; and the pardonable vanity with which I scanned the flattering encomiums thereon in the local newspapers can scarcely be described.

In an unlucky hour, a twelvemonth later, I met an amateur, who recognised me as the precocious youth who, a few evenings before, had distinguished himself at a local entertainment. Five minutes' conversation resulted in a proffered introduction to the club of which he was one of the ruling spirits. It was entitled "The United Thespians;" and when, a night or two later, I sat as a spectator at one of this body's periodical performances—it was *Macbeth*—I was so carried away by my natural enthusiasm for the stage, that I not only enrolled myself a member on the spot, but I guaranteed also to pay the sum of fifteen shillings for the privilege of playing "leading business" on the next occasion, before anyone else could possibly have found time to forestall me.

From that moment I imagined myself already on the high road to histrionic fame, and my rehearsing exploits began in earnest. My chosen character (chosen by virtue of my fee) was no other than *Richard the Third*, and right earnestly I made up my mind to do justice to the part. Night and day I studied it—at dead of night within the seclusion of my chamber; during the day, as often as my father's absence afforded me an opportunity. An old sword, picked up at a second-hand store, became my first "property;" and this identical weapon it was that led me to my first experience of a roving profession.

How this came about I will at once explain.

Two days prior to my arranged appearance as the crooked-backed monarch (fancy a boy of sixteen in that *rôle!*), I had established myself, as usual, at the back of the shop, directly my father had disappeared in the perspective of the long street, and began to run through the part. My trusty sword was, of course, called into requisition. My study was all but perfect, and gladly did I embrace the chances of a rehearsal under such favoured conditions.

Standing in the centre of the spacious flooring, I delivered the speeches with due majesty and power, moving backwards and forwards, and otherwise suiting the action to the word; and, above all, longing for that famous line—

"Off with his head—so much for Buckingham!"

to which I determined to impart its full *weight* and significance.

But the unhappy moment came only too soon ; for grasping my sword as I pronounced the words, I swung it over my shoulder with an air of command, when—CRASH, SMASH !

Looking round, I beheld an immense figure of Hercules completely *decapitated* by my ponderous blow ; and its head, alighting upon a glass shelf close by, broke it, then settled itself on the top of a beautiful Venetian vase, which, on being smashed to atoms, left no hope of its costly companion ever finding a purchaser.

The damage I estimated roughly at twenty pounds !

I stood dumb-founded ! What was I to do ?

Certainly I could not think of staying where I was to confront my father ; particularly, should the previous day's great race have negatived his betting, in which event his fury would know no bounds. I felt prompted by but one desire, to fly from the scene of the disaster before his return. Two minutes only I required for deliberation, after which I commenced my flight.

Quickly I ascended to my chamber, where I made up a convenient bundle of clean linen ; and then, in possession only of my undutiful sword, my bundle, and half-a-crown in my pocket, I secured the street door on the inside, and quitted the premises at the rear, as I intended, for ever. In less than half-an-hour I had left home far behind ; then I paused for a while to reflect upon my situation. But the more I deliberated upon the step I had taken, the more reluctant, nay, the more terrified I became to encounter my father's wrath, as the inevitable consequence of my mad freak !

Suddenly, too, I recollected that an annual fair was to be held the next day in a neighbouring town, and this decided me. At the very worst, I thought, I might be able to pick up some kind of employment among the show-people, and once drafted into a roving profession, so akin to the drama, it would possibly prove the means of my one day treading the boards of a regular theatre. Moreover, I should be at once placed beyond the reach of my father.

Space being limited, it will suffice to state that somewhat late in the evening I arrived upon the fair-ground ; and on relating my story to one whom I fancied looked like a kind-hearted showman, apparently short of a hand, I obtained an engagement, at a water-gruel salary, as *doorsman* (*!*) to his exhibition. That night was the first I had ever spent from home ; so, as an introduction to my after-discomforts, I made the best of the accommodation at my disposal by improvising a bed upon a bundle of straw thrown between the wheels of a caravan, on the hard ground. But I felt weary enough, and dropped off to sleep the instant that I closed my eyes. When I awoke in the morning, I felt none the worse for my first experience of showman life.

It was not long before I discovered that our show was one of the monstrosity order.

Let me here tender a few of the items of our collection, as depicted upon the enormous canvas posters which I presently helped to fix in position.

First and foremost, there was a "real African giantess," standing nine feet high, and towering above the "crowned heads" that surrounded her. Next came an "armless young lady," performing feats of embroidery with her toes; a two-headed infant; a pig with six legs; and an educated pig, in addition to a number of wild animals, rattlesnakes, and other curiosities which, as I afterwards learnt, the show did not contain. By and by, I had the pleasure of looking upon the originals; as also of being personally introduced to the "giantess." As a foretaste of what subsequently happened, I must allow that the descriptions were *slightly* exaggerated.

After partaking of a hasty meal, the "living" and other curiosities were placed inside the show; a curtained partition was provided in one corner of the platform for the private use of the giantess during the intervals of exhibition—when the business of the day was ready to be commenced.

At twelve o'clock precisely, the fun of the fair began. I was posted (with the boy who took the coppers) outside the door as spokesman. My occupation suited me to a T, since, in addition to my natural vigour of lung-power, I was a good patterer, and had always been handy at invention. The only change in my personal appearance was an enormous hat, spangled all over, besides a dab and a half of rouge on my face to make me look something like a sunburnt hero.

Bang! went the drums; Clash! went the cymbals; Boo-woo-woo! went the speaking-trumpets; Woo-woo-woo! went the gongs. Each rival showman exerted himself to the utmost to create an infernal din and uproar to attract the public. Crowds had already assembled on the ground, and the crush was every moment increasing. Here were swings, shooting-galleries, sparring-saloons, peep-shows, boiled-pea stalls, booths, and shows of every variety, and great masses of human beings all jumbled up together, like onions in a sack.

The reader will scarcely fail to appreciate my particular powers of showman oratory.

"Hi', hi', hi'!" I cried, as pointing with a long whip to the different canvasses described, I drew the crowd around me; "hi', hi', hi'! the finest exhibition in the fair, gentlemen. Come and see the great African giantess, standing nine feet high, as faithfully represented here [whereto went the point of my whip], as she appeared by command before her Majesty the Queen and all the crowned heads of Europe. This lady is a native of Bamboozala, in the centre of Africa; thirty-one years of age, and speaking fourteen different dialects of the African language. As a proof of what I say, gentlemen, I repeat, as a proof of what I say, the giantess will converse in her own tongue with the

manager of this exhibition, or with any other gentleman speaking African language. Hi', hi', hi'! there is no waiting here, and the admission is only one penny!"

Following this marvellous delivery, a number of rustics put their hands into their capacious pockets; and, finding they could afford to treat themselves to a sight of the giantess, it was with characteristic eagerness that they handed their coppers to the boy in the doorway, and pressed inside the show. Boo-woo-woo! went the gong once more, which, suspended at my right-hand, I took care to belabour with a will.

To my second audience I addressed this harangue:—

"Hi', hi', hi'! gentlemen! hi', hi', hi'! In addition to the great giantess, we have the wonderful armless young lady, who performs the most extraordinary feats with her toes: cuts out paper patterns; pours out her tea; drinks it; takes her meals, and performs all the ordinary duties of life as well with her feet as you or I could do with our ten fingers. Hi', hi', hi'! alive, alive! and the admission is only one penny!"

My programme being well-nigh exhausted, I hereupon belaboured the gong in order to gain time, while I summed up the remainder of our legitimate curiosities, as well as to hit upon one or two of a more fictitious character, as follows:—

"Hi', hi', hi'! Don't forget to see the six-legged pig; or the educated pig that can tell your fortunes from a pack of cards, and the wonderful infant with two perfect heads. Then, we have the remarkable brandysnapped rhinoceros, from the wilds of Tartary; the spotted calf with the yellow tail, and a hundred other curiosities too numerous to mention. Walk inside, gentlemen; for there is no waiting, and the charge is only one penny!"

By this time I had attracted an immense amount of patronage, and the show was crowded to excess. Many and jealous were the glances that were directed upon me from Snubb's Royal Amphitheatre over the way; while several times I was threatened with a visit from the drumstick at the instigation of the irate clown who wielded it. The people were only too delighted to cram the narrow limits of our show; but when they emerged, their faces bore a disappointment which seemed to demand some explanation.

"I say, doorsman!" exclaimed a bilious-looking gentleman who had just made his exit, though with difficulty, owing to the blockade at the doorway, "where do you keep your brandy-snapped rhinoceros and the spotted calf?"

"Just this minute been sent for by the Mayor for private inspection at a party!" I answered, quickly; then, before he could find an opportunity to grumble aloud, I commenced banging away at the gong, and roared,

"Hear what the gentleman says about our brandysnapped rhinoceros! He says that on setting his eyes upon the animal,

he at once identified it as the one he saw on the coast of Coromandel fifteen years ago."

"I never said anything of the sort!" he put in, as for a moment I paused to draw breath, "It's a d—d imposition, that's what it is——!"

But he was not permitted to proceed further; for by the time that I had ceased to manipulate the gongstick, purposely to drown his voice, my unsatisfied critic had got hustled far out of reach in the crush that came by.

Boo-woo-woo! went the gong once more, as I commenced to repeat my extraordinary patter.

"Hi', hi', hi'! Come and see the great ——!"

"Noo then, moind weere yer cumin' too wi' yer whip!" cried a countryman at this moment, who had evidently experienced the point of that weapon in a juxtaposition to his eye, my attention having been attracted to the fat gentleman, again pushing his way towards me. His vexed ejaculation, however, aroused me to a due sense of my position, and, taking full advantage of the interruption, I shouted,

"Hear what the Lincolnshire gentleman says! He says that every object in our exhibition is alone worth ten times the price of admission——!"

"It's a loi, and take that!" cried the lout, accompanying his words with a prodigious blow upon the lower portion of my waistcoat, in consequence of which I dropped my whip and rolled off my perch, completely doubled up with pain.

The assembled crowd laughed outright; while Snubb's Royal clown, who had witnessed the act, tried to profit by it to the utmost by plying his drumstick even more vigorously than ever during my enforced retirement.

Presently, however, I recovered. I mounted my box, picked up the whip, and began to harangue the crowd as before. But, ere I had proceeded beyond the opening sentence, an apparition of such an alarming character suddenly appeared before me, that I involuntarily stopped short, and rushed inside the show in the direst precipitation.

"What's the matter?" inquired the showman, anxiously; for he must have noticed my terror. I could only answer him in two words.

"My father!"

"Oh! all right," he returned quietly. "You stop here to exhibit, and I'll go outside." Saying which he at once disappeared through the doorway; and the next moment I heard his voice loudly addressing the multitude.

"The proprietor," I began, as, mounting the platform, I accosted my audience, "has just been called away to see the Japanese Ambassador in reference to our exhibition. Therefore, with your permission, I will introduce you to our collection of curiosities."

The amount of self-confidence that I possessed was really wonderful; and the happy knack of being able to frame the

most outrageous excuses on the most momentous occasions had often, even in my boyhood, saved me from the consequences of unforeseen accidents and difficulties. But to proceed.

"In the first place," I continued, "let me show you the two-headed infant ——"

"We've seen that 'un," cried several on the instant.

"Then, we have the educated pig ——" I went on.

"We've had that 'un too!" a couple of louts broke in.

"Then ——"

But, in truth, I was sorely puzzled what was next to be done, conscious that our collection of legitimate novelties was so extremely limited, when, as luck would have it, the giantess gave vent to a succession of loud sneezes behind the curtains which separated her from the spectators.

"Ladies and gentlemen," I said, with hopes considerably revived, "permit me the pleasure of introducing to your notice the real African giantess ——"

"Is that you exhibiting, Masther Wiggins? Wait a minute, plaze," cried that lady from her sanctum, in an unnecessarily loud voice.

Murmurs of curiosity among the audience following these few words ran rife: they sounded so thoroughly *Irish* that one and all must instantly have detected the fraud.

Undaunted, however, I put my head between the curtains, when, notwithstanding all the deceit of which I had been guilty, and though my very life might have been at stake, I could scarcely refrain from laughing outright. As it was, I was compelled to stuff my sleeve between my teeth before I dared venture to withdraw my head from the curtains to face the audience. What had happened?

She had been going through the diverting effects of a sneezing fit, and whilst making a liberal use of her pocket-handkerchief, had rubbed the whole of the *burnt cork* off her nose; which gave her the most ludicrous appearance that it was possible to imagine!

Truly, I had never gazed upon a black-and-tan human face before.

After I had succeeded in suppressing my risibility, and whilst the giantess quickly modified her complexion, I explained the cause of delay as follows:—

"The giantess, ladies and gentlemen," said I, "is just finishing a letter to the Duke of Sutherland, in answer to a command to appear at his country seat."

"Don't believe it!" cried one.

"Fetch 'er out an' see!" suggested another.

"They 've got never a giantess at all," bawled a third, in an infuriated tone; and whilst I, in despair, glanced around to see what other objects of interest might suffice to gain time until the lady could put in her appearance, oh, horror, a MAN entered the show!

It *was my father!*

In an instant, before he could possibly have descried me, I jumped off the platform, darted beneath, groped my way through the narrow space, and with a pocket-knife succeeded in cutting a long rent in the canvas which alone barred my escape. All this was the work of a moment; nevertheless, I overheard several remarks of this purport:—

"W'ats oop wi' 'im?"

"'Es got a fit!"

"Send for a Peeler!"—meaning a policeman.

But I was soon in the open air, where I sought to elude my parent by running behind the shows.

Thrice I tripped up; and many a time I ran full butt against the ropes aud staples that supported the various tents, booths, and the like, cutting myself, and imparting such shocks to my frame as I had never before experienced. Once I fell with my hand flop into a huge dish of peas-pudding, which, seemingly in anticipation of some showman's dinner, was placed upon a napkin on the grass; while, at another point, I narrowly escaped having my head broken open by a ginger-beer bottle shied at me by an angry clown after I had passed him in the course of my flight.

I must have made the circumference of the fair-ground in no time; until worn out and breathless, I espied an opening in the canvas-back of one of the shows. Of course, I lost no time in turning this new means of escape to practical account. Imagine my astonishment, however, when I found myself in *the identical show from which I had so precipitately fled!*

The confused scene that awaited this my return was altogether beyond description. Frightful shouts and shrieks rent the air; and during the few moments that I was suffered to remain unmolested, though the mob, closing around me, had cut off *in toto* my original means of escape, the following among other transactions met my view.

In one corner of the show there stood, at bay, the "real African giantess," with half the black rubbed off her face, swearing in the most pronounced Irish fashion, and vainly defending herself against the combined sticks and umbrellas of the mob; while in an opposite corner the showman himself was being thrashed in an equally sound manner. The educated pig, squealing without cessation, had all to do to prevent itself getting trampled under the feet of the many; the six-legged pig and the two-headed infant had disappeared, the glass shades belonging to both having been broken; and lastly, the "armless young lady" was engaged in scratching a man's face with as capable a set of fingers as Mother Eve had ever bequeathed to her daughters.

Nor was I, myself, permitted to remain long in security. For while I constantly shifted my position to regain, if possible, the

original means of my escape, the eyes of a country bumpkin rested upon me.

"Hulloa! here bee 't spoakesman!" he shouted exultantly, as he pointed me out to the crowd.

I was doomed. In less than two seconds I felt myself seized by many pairs of ruthless hands and carried outside the show; nor knew aught more of my surroundings until my feelings were considerably cooled by being thrown, pell-mell, into a cattle-trough.

* * * *

The sequel to this episode was, that my father carried me home in triumph. But it was not long before I found an opportunity to run away again for ever. It was then I took to the stage, and suffered many a vicissitude in consequence. I am an actor still—*I would I were a shoemaker!*

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A VOICE FROM THE NILE.

James Thomson.*

I come from mountains under other stars
Than those reflected in my waters here;
Athwart broad realms, beneath large skies, I flow,
Between the Libyan and Arabian hills,
And merge at last into the great Mid-Sea;
And make this land of Egypt. All is mine:
The palm-trees and the doves among the palms,
The corn-fields and the flowers among the corn,
The patient oxen and the crocodiles,
The ibis and the heron, and the hawk,
The lotus and the thick papyrus reeds,
The slant-sailed boats that flit before the wind
Or up my rapids ropes hale heavily;
Yea, even all the massive temple-fronts
With all their columns and huge effigies,
The pyramids and Memnon and the Sphinx,
This Cairo and the city of the Greek
As Memphis and the hundred-gated Thebes,
Sais and Denderah of Isis queen;
Have grown because I fed them with full life,
And flourish only while I feed them still.
For if I stint my fertilising flood,
Gaunt famine reaps among the sons of men
Who have not corn to reap for all they sowed,
And blight and languishment are everywhere;
And when I have withdrawn or turned aside

* The Author of "The City of Dreadful Night."

To other realms my ever-flowing streams,
The old realms withered from their old renown,
The sands came over them, the desert sands
Incessantly encroaching, numberless
Beyond my water-drops, and buried them,
And all is silence, solitude, and death,
Exanimate silence while the waste winds howl
Over the sad immeasurable waste.

Dusk memories haunt me of an infinite past,
Ages and cycles brood above my springs,
Though I remember not my primal birth.
So ancient is my being and august,
I know not anything more venerable ;
Unless, perchance, the vaulting skies that hold
The sun and moon and stars that shine on me ;
The air that breathes upon me with delight ;
And Earth, All-Mother, all-beneficent,
Who held her mountains forth like opulent breasts
To cradle me and feed me with their snows,
And hollowed out the great sea to receive
My overplus of flowing energy :
Blessèd for ever be our Mother Earth.

Only, the mountains that must feed my springs
Year after year and every year with snows
As they have fed innumerable years,
These mountains they are evermore the same,
Rooted and motionless ; the solemn heavens
Are evermore the same in stable rest ;
The sun and moon and stars that shine on me
Are evermore the same although they move :
I solely, moving ever without pause,
Am evermore the same and not the same ;
Pouring myself away into the sea
And self-renewing from the farthest heights ;
Ever-fresh waters streaming down and down,
The one old Nilus constant through their change.

The creatures also whom I breed and feed
Perpetually perish and dissolve,
And other creatures like them take their place,
To perish in their turn and be no more :
My profluent waters perish not from life,
Absorbed into the ever-living sea
Whose life is in their full replenishment.

Of all these creatures whom I breed and feed,
One only with his works is strange to me,
Is strange and admirable and pitiable,
As homeless where all others are at home.
My crocodiles are happy in my slime,

And bask and seize their prey, each for itself,
And leave their eggs to hatch in the hot sun,
And die, their lives fulfilled, and are no more,
And others bask and prey and leave their eggs.
My doves they build their nests, each pair its own,
And feed their callow young, each pair its own,
None serves another, each one serves itself,
All glean alike about my fields of grain,
And all the nests they build them are alike,
And are the self-same nests they built of old
Before the rearing of the pyramids,
Before great Hekatompylos was reared;
Their cooing is the cooing soft and sweet
That murmured plaintively at evening-tide
In pillared Karnak as its pillars rose;
And they are happy floating through my palms.

But Man, the admirable, the pitiable,
These sad-eyed peoples of the sons of men,
Are as the children of an alien race
Planted among my children, not at home,
Changelings aloof from all my family.
The one is servant and the other lord,
And many myriads serve a single lord:
So was it when the pyramids were reared,
And sphinxes and huge columns and wrought stones
Were haled long lengthening leagues adown my banks
By hundreds groaning with the stress of toil
And groaning under the taskmaster's scourge,
With many falling foredone by the way,
Half-starved on lentils, onions, and scant bread;
So is it now with these poor fellaheen
To whom my annual bounty brings fierce toil
With scarce enough of food to keep-in life.
They build mud huts and spacious palaces;
And in the huts the moiling millions live,
And in the palaces their sumptuous lords
Pampered with all the choicest things I yield:
Most admirable, most pitiable Man.

Also their peoples ever are at war,
Slaying and slain, burning and ravaging,
And one yields to another and they pass,
While I flow evermore the same great Nile,
The ever-young and ever-ancient Nile:
The swarthy is succeeded by the dusk,
The dusky by the pale, the pale again
By sunburned turbaned tribes long-linen robed:
And with these changes all things change and pass,
All things but Me and this old Land of mine,

Their dwellings, habitudes and garbs, and tongues :
I hear strange voices ; never more the voice
Austere priests chanted to the boat of death
Gliding across the Acherusian lake,
Or satraps parleyed in the Pharaohs' halls ;
Never the voice of mad Cambyses' hosts,
Never the voice of Alexander's Greece,
Never the voice of Cæsar's haughty Rome :
And with the peoples and the languages,
With the great Empires still the great Creeds change ;
They shift, they change, they vanish like thin dreams,
As unsubstantial as the mists that rise
After my overflow from out my fields,
In silver fleeces, golden volumes, rise,
And melt away before the mounting sun ;
While I flow onward slowly permanent
Amidst their swiftly-passing pageantry.

Poor men, most admirable, most pitiable,
With all their changes all their great Creeds change :
For Man, this alien in my family,
Is alien most in this, to cherish dreams
And brood on visions of eternity,
And build religions in his brooding brain
And in the dark depths awe-full of his soul.
My other children live their little lives,
Are born and reach their prime and slowly fail,
And all their little lives are self-fulfilled ;
They die and are no more, content with age
And weary with infirmity. But Man
Has fear and hope and phantasy and awe,
And wistful yearnings and unsated loves,
That strain beyond the limits of this life,
And therefore Gods, and Demons, Heaven and Hell ;
This Man, the admirable, the pitiable.

Lo, I look backward some few thousand years,
And see men hewing temples in my rocks
With seated forms gigantic fronting them,
And solemn labyrinthine catacombs
With tombs all pictured with fair scenes of life
And scenes and symbols of mysterious death ;
And planting avenues of sphinxes forth,
Sphinxes couched calm, whose passionless regard
Sets timeless riddles to bewildered time,
Forth from my sacred banks to other fanes
Islanded in the boundless sea of air
Upon whose walls and colonnades are carved
Tremendous hieroglyphs of secret things ;
I see embalming of the bodies dead

And judging of the disembodied souls ;
I see the sacred animals alive,
And statues of the various-headed gods,
Among them throned a woman and a babe,
The goddess crescent-horned, the babe divine.
Then I flow forward some few thousand years,
And see new temples shining with all grace,
Whose sculptured gods are beautiful human forms.
Then I flow forward not a thousand years,
And see again a woman and a babe,
The woman haloed and the babe divine ;
And everywhere that symbol of the cross
I knew aforetime in the ancient days,
The emblem then of life, but now of death.
Then I flow forward some few hundred years,
And see again the crescent, now supreme
On lofty cupolas and minarets
Whence voices sweet and solemn call to prayer.
So the men change along my changeless stream,
And change their faiths ; but I yield all alike
Sweet water for their drinking, sweet as wine,
And pure sweet water for their lustral rites :
For thirty generations of my corn
Outlast a generation of my men,
And thirty generations of my men
Outlast a generation of their gods :
O admirable, pitiable Man,
My child, yet alien in my family.

And I through all these generations flow
Of corn and men and gods, all-bountiful,
Perennial through their transientness, still fed
By earth with waters in abundancy ;
And as I flowed here long before they were,
So may I flow when they no longer are,
Most like the serpent of eternity :
Blessèd for ever be our Mother Earth.

(*By permission of* Messrs. REEVES & TURNER.)

TENNESSEE'S PARTNER.

BRET HARTE.

I DO not think that we ever knew his real name. Our ignorance of it certainly never gave us any social inconvenience, for at Sandy Bar, in 1854, most men were christened anew. Sometimes these appellatives were derived from some distinctiveness of dress, as in the case of "Dungaree Jack ;" or from some peculiarity of habit, as shown in "Saleratus Bill," so called

from an undue proportion of that chemical in his daily bread; or from some unlucky slip, as exhibited in "The Iron Pirate," a mild, inoffensive man, who earned that baleful title by his unfortunate mispronunciation of the term "iron pyrites." Perhaps this may have been the beginning of a rude heraldry; but I am constrained to think that it was because a man's real name in that day rested solely upon his own unsupported statement. "Call yourself Clifford, do you?" said Boston, addressing a timid new-comer with infinite scorn; "hell is full of such Cliffords!" He then introduced the unfortunate man, whose name happened to be really Clifford, as "Jay-bird Charley"—an unhallowed inspiration of the moment, that clung to him ever after.

But to return to Tennessee's Partner, whom we never knew by any other than this relative title; that he had ever existed as a separate and distinct individuality we only learned later. It seems that in 1853 he left Poker Flat to go to San Francisco, ostensibly to procure a wife. He never got any further than Stockton. At that place he was attracted by a young person who waited upon the table at the hotel where he took his meals. One morning he said something to her which caused her to smile not unkindly, to somewhat coquettishly break a plate of toast over his upturned, serious, simple face, and to retreat to the kitchen. He followed her, and emerged a few moments later, covered with more toast and victory. That day week they were married by a justice of the peace, and returned to Poker Flat. I am aware that something might be made of this episode, but I prefer to tell it as it was current at Sandy Bar—in the gulches and bar-rooms—where all sentiment was modified by a strong sense of humour.

Of their married felicity but little is known, perhaps for the reason that Tennessee, then living with his partner, one day took occasion to say something to the bride on his own account, at which, it is said, she smiled not unkindly, and chastely retreated;—this time as far as Marysville, where Tennessee followed her, and where they went to housekeeping without the aid of a justice of the peace. Tennessee's Partner took the loss of his wife simply and seriously, as was his fashion. But to everybody's surprise, when Tennessee one day returned from Marysville, without his partner's wife—she having smiled and retreated with somebody else—Tennessee's Partner was the first man to shake his hand and greet him with affection. The boys who had gathered in the cañon to see the shooting were naturally indignant. Their indignation might have found vent in sarcasm but for a certain look in Tennessee's Partner's eye that indicated a lack of humorous appreciation. In fact, he was a grave man, with a steady application to practical detail which was unpleasant in a difficulty.

Meanwhile, a popular feeling against Tennessee had grown up on the Bar. He was known to be a gambler; he was suspected

to be a thief. In these suspicions Tennessee's Partner was equally compromised; his continued intimacy with Tennessee after the affair above quoted could only be accounted for on the hypothesis of a co-partnership of crime. At last Tennessee's guilt became flagrant. One day he overtook a stranger on his way to Red Dog. The stranger afterwards related that Tennessee beguiled the time with interesting anecdote and reminiscence, but illogically concluded the interview in the following words: "And now, young man, I'll trouble you for your knife, your pistols, and your money. You see your weppings might get you into trouble at Red Dog, and your money's a temptation to the evilly-disposed. I think you said your address was San Francisco. I shall endeavour to call." It may be stated here that Tennessee had a fine flow of humour, which no business preoccupation could wholly subdue.

This exploit was his last. Red Dog and Sandy Bar made common cause against the highwayman. Tennessee was hunted in very much the same fashion as his prototype, the grizzly. As the toils closed around him, he made a desperate dash through the Bar, emptying his revolver at the crowd before the Arcade Saloon, and so up Grizzly Cañon; but at its further extremity he was stopped by a small man on a gray horse. The men looked at each other a moment in silence. Both were fearless, both self-possessed and independent; and both types of a civilisation that in the seventeenth century would have been called heroic, but, in the nineteenth, simply "reckless." "What have you got there?—I call," said Tennessee quietly. "Two bowers and an ace," said the stranger, as quietly, showing two revolvers and a bowie-knife. "That takes me," returned Tennessee; and with this gambler's epigram, he threw away his useless pistol, and rode back with his captor.

It was a warm night. The cool breeze which usually sprang up with the going down of the sun behind the *chaparral*-crested mountain was that evening withheld from Sandy Bar. The little cañon was stifling with heated resinous odours, and the decaying driftwood on the Bar sent forth faint, sickening exhalations. The feverishness of day, and its fierce passions, still filled the camp. Lights moved restlessly along the bank of the river, striking no answering reflection from its tawny current. Against the blackness of the pines the windows of the old loft above the express office stood out staringly bright; and through their curtainless panes the loungers below could see the forms of those who were even then deciding the fate of Tennessee. And above all this, etched on the dark firmament, rose the Sierra, remote and passionless, crowned with remoter passionless stars.

The trial of Tennessee was conducted as fairly as was consistent with a judge and jury who felt themselves to some extent obliged to justify, in their verdict, the previous irregularities of

arrest and indictment. The law of Sandy Bar was implacable, but not vengeful. The excitement and personal feeling of the chase were over; with Tennessee safe in their hands they were ready to listen patiently to any defence, which they were already satisfied was insufficient. There being no doubt in their own minds, they were willing to give the prisoner the benefit of any that might exist. Secure in the hypothesis that he ought to be hanged on general principles, they indulged him with more latitude of defence than his reckless hardihood seemed to ask. The judge appeared to be more anxious than the prisoner, who otherwise unconcerned, evidently took a grim pleasure in the responsibility he had created. "I don't take any hand in this yer game," had been his invariable, but good-humoured, reply to all questions. The judge—who was also his captor—for a moment vaguely regretted that he had not shot him "on sight," that morning, but presently dismissed this human weakness as unworthy of the judicial mind. Nevertheless, when there was a tap at the door, and it was said that Tennessee's Partner was there on behalf of the prisoner, he was admitted at once without question. Perhaps the younger members of the jury, to whom the proceedings were becoming irksomely thoughtful, hailed him as a relief.

For he was not, certainly, an imposing figure. Short and stout, with a square face, sunburned into a preternatural redness, clad in a loose duck "jumper," and trousers streaked and splashed with red soil, his aspect under any circumstances would have been quaint, and was now even ridiculous. As he stooped to deposit at his feet a heavy carpet-bag he was carrying, it became obvious, from partially developed legends and inscriptions, that the material with which his trousers had been patched had been originally intended for a less ambitious covering. Yet he advanced with great gravity, and after having shaken the hand of each person in the room with laboured cordiality, he wiped his serious, perplexed face on a red bandanna handkerchief, a shade lighter than his complexion, laid his powerful hand upon the table to steady himself, and thus addressed the judge:—

"I was passin' by," he began, by way of apology, "and I thought I'd just step in and see how things was gettin' on with Tennessee thar—my pardner. It's a hot night. I disremember any sich weather before on the Bar."

He paused a moment, but nobody volunteering any other meteorological recollection, he again had recourse to his pocket-handkerchief, and for some moments mopped his face diligently.

"Have you anything to say in behalf of the prisoner?" asked the judge finally.

"Thet's it," said Tennessee's Partner, in a tone of relief. "I come yar as Tennessee's pardner—knowing him nigh on four year, off and on, wet and dry, in luck and out o' luck. His ways ain't allers my ways, but thar ain't any p'ints in that young

man, thar ain't any liveliness as he's been up to, as I don't know. And you sez to me, sez you—confidential-like, and between man and man—sez you, 'Do you know anything in his behalf?' and I sez to you, sez I—confidential-like, as between man and man—'What should a man know of his pardner?'"

"Is this all you have to say?" asked the judge impatiently, feeling, perhaps, that a dangerous sympathy of humour was beginning to humanize the court.

"Thet's so," continued Tennessee's Partner. "It ain't for me to say anything agin' him. And now what's the case? Here's Tennessee wants money, wants it bad, and doesn't like to ask it of his old pardner. Well, what does Tennessee do? He lays for a stranger, and he fetches that stranger. And you lays for *him*, and you fetches *him;* and the honours is easy. And I put it to you, bein' a far-minded man, and to you, gentlemen, all, as far-minded men, ef this isn't so."

"Prisoner," said the judge, interrupting, "have you any questions to ask this man?"

"No! no!" continued Tennessee's Partner, hastily. "I play this yer hand alone. To come down to the bed-rock, it's just this: Tennessee, thar, has played it pretty rough and expensive-like on a stranger, and on this yer camp. And now, what's the fair thing? Some would say more; some would say less. Here's seventeen hundred dollars in coarse gold and a watch—it's about all my pile—and call it square!" And before a hand could be raised to prevent him, he had emptied the contents of the carpet-bag upon the table.

For a moment his life was in jeopardy. One or two men sprang to their feet, several hands groped for hidden weapons, and a suggestion to "throw him from the window" was only overridden by a gesture from the judge. Tennessee laughed. And apparently oblivious of the excitement, Tennessee's Partner improved the opportunity to mop his face again with his handkerchief.

When order was restored, and the man was made to understand, by the use of forcible figures and rhetoric, that Tennessee's offence could not be condoned by money, his face took a more serious and sanguinary hue, and those who were nearest to him noticed that his rough hand trembled slightly on the table. He hesitated a moment as he slowly returned the gold to the carpet-bag, as if he had not yet entirely caught the elevated sense of justice which swayed the tribunal, and was perplexed with the belief that he had not offered enough. Then he turned to the judge, and saying, "This yer is a lone hand, played alone, and without my pardner," he bowed to the jury, and was about to withdraw, when the judge called him back. "If you have anything to say to Tennessee, you had better say it now." For the first time that evening the eyes of the prisoner and his strange advocate met. Tennessee smiled, showed his white teeth, and saying, "Euchred, old man!" held out his hand. Tennessee's

Partner took it in his own, and saying, "I just dropped in as I was passin' to see how things was gittin' on," let the hand passively fall, and adding that "it was a warm night," again mopped his face with his handkerchief, and without another word, withdrew

The two men never again met each other alive. For the unparalleled insult of a bribe offered to Judge Lynch—who, whether bigoted, weak, or narrow, was at least incorruptible—firmly fixed in the mind of that mythical personage any wavering determination of Tennessee's fate; and at the break of day he was marched, closely guarded, to meet it at the top of Marley's Hill.

How he met it, how cool he was, how he refused to say anything, how perfect were the arrangements of the committee, were all duly reported, with the addition of a warning moral and example to all future evil-doers, in the *Red Dog Clarion*, by its editor, who was present, and to whose vigorous English I cheerfully refer the reader. But the beauty of that midsummer morning, the blessed amity of the earth, and air, and sky, the awakened life of the free woods and hills, the joyous renewal and promise of Nature, and, above all, the infinite serenity that thrilled through each, was not reported, as not being a part of the social lesson. And yet, when the weak and foolish deed was done, and a life, with all its possibilities and responsibilities, had passed out of the misshapen thing that dangled between earth and sky, the birds sang, the flowers bloomed, the sun shone, as cheerily as before; and possibly the *Red Dog Clarion* was right.

Tennessee's Partner was not in the group that surrounded the ominous tree. But as they turned to disperse, attention was drawn to the singular appearance of a motionless donkey-cart halted at the side of the road. As they approached, they at once recognised the venerable "Jinny" and the two-wheeled cart as the property of Tennessee's Partner—used by him in carrying dirt from his claim; and a few paces distant the owner of the equipage himself, sitting under a buckeye-tree, wiping the perspiration from his glowing face. In answer to an inquiry, he said that he had come for the body of the "diseased," "if it was all the same to the committee." He didn't wish to "hurry anything;" he could "wait." He was not working that day; and when the gentlemen were done with the "diseased," he would take him. "Ef thar is any present," he added, in his simple, serious way, "as would care to jine in the fun'l, they kin come." Perhaps it was from a sense of humour, which I have already intimated was a feature of Sandy Bar,—perhaps it was from something even better than that; but two-thirds of the loungers accepted the invitation at once.

It was noon when the body of Tennessee was delivered into the hands of his partner. As the cart drew up to the fatal tree, we noticed that it contained a rough, oblong box, apparently made from a section of sluicing,—and half filled with bark and the tassels of pine. The cart was further decorated with slips

of willow, and made fragrant with buckeye blossoms. When the body was deposited in the box, Tennessee's Partner drew over it a piece of tarred canvas, and gravely mounting the narrow seat in front, with his feet upon the shafts, urged the little donkey forward. The equipage moved slowly on, at that decorous pace which was habitual with "Jinny," even under less solemn circumstances. The men—half-curiously, half-jestingly; but all good-humouredly—strolled along beside the cart; some in advance, some a little way in the rear, of the homely catafalque. But, whether from the narrowing of the road, or some present sense of decorum, as the cart passed on, the company fell to the rear in couples, keeping step, and otherwise assuming the external show of a formal procession. Jack Folinsbee, who had at the outset played a funeral march in dumb show upon an imaginary trombone, desisted, from a lack of sympathy and appreciation,—not having, perhaps, your true humorist's capacity to be content with the enjoyment of his own fun.

The way led through Grizzly Cañon—by this time clothed in funereal drapery and shadows. The red-woods, burying their moccasined feet in the red soil, stood in Indian file along the track, trailing an uncouth benediction from their bending boughs upon the passing bier. A hare, surprised into helpless activity, sat upright and pulsating in the ferns by the roadside, as the *cortège* went by. Squirrels hastened to gain a secure outlook from higher boughs; and the blue-jays, spreading their wings, fluttered before them like outriders, until the outskirts of Sandy Bar were reached, and the solitary cabin of Tennessee's Partner.

Viewed under more favourable circumstances, it would not have been a cheerful place. The unpicturesque site, the rude and unlovely outlines, the unsavoury details, which distinguish the nest-building of the California miner, were all here, with the dreariness of decay superadded. A few paces from the cabin there was a rough enclosure, which, in the brief days of Tennessee's Partner's matrimonial felicity, had been used as a garden, but was now overgrown with fern. As we approached it, we were surprised to find that what we had taken for a recent attempt at cultivation was the broken soil about an open grave.

The cart was halted before the enclosure; and, rejecting the offers of assistance with the same air of simple self-reliance he had displayed throughout, Tennessee's Partner lifted the rough coffin on his back, and deposited it, unaided, within the shallow grave. He then nailed down the board which served as a lid; and mounting the little mound of earth beside it, took off his hat, and slowly mopped his face with his handkerchief. This the crowd felt was a preliminary to speech; and they disposed themselves variously on stumps and boulders, and sat expectant.

"When a man," began Tennessee's Partner, slowly, "has been running free all day, what's the natural thing for him to do?

Why, to come home. And if he ain't in a condition to go home, what can his best friend do? Why, bring him home! And here's Tennessee has been running free, and we brings him home from his wandering." He paused, and picked up a fragment of quartz, rubbed it thoughtfully on his sleeve, and went on. "It ain't the first time that I've packed him on my back as you see'd me now. It ain't the first time that I brought him to this yer cabin when he couldn't help himself; it ain't the first time that I and 'Jinny' have waited for him on yon hill, and picked him up, and so fetched him home, when he couldn't speak, and didn't know me. And now it's the last time, why——" he paused, and rubbed the quartz gently on his sleeve—"you see it's a sort of rough on his partner. And now, gentlemen," he added abruptly, picking up his long-handled shovel, "the fun'l's over; and my thanks, and Tennessee's thanks, to you for your trouble."

Resisting any proffers of assistance, he began to fill in the grave, turning his back upon the crowd, that, after a few moments' hesitation, gradually withdrew. As they crossed the little ridge that hid Sandy Bar from view, some, looking back, thought they could see Tennessee's Partner, his work done, sitting upon the grave, his shovel between his knees, and his face buried in his red bandanna handkerchief. But it was argued by others that you couldn't tell his face from his handkerchief at that distance; and this point remained undecided.

In the reaction that followed the feverish excitement of that day, Tennessee's Partner was not forgotten. A secret investigation had cleared him of any complicity in Tennessee's guilt, and left only a suspicion of his general sanity. Sandy Bar made a point of calling on him, and proffering various uncouth, but well-meant kindnesses. But from that day his rude health and great strength seemed visibly to decline; and when the rainy season fairly set in, and the tiny grass-blades were beginning to peep from the rocky mound above Tennessee's grave, he took to his bed.

One night, when the pines beside the cabin were swaying in the storm, and trailing their slender fingers over the roof, and the roar and rush of the swollen river were heard below, Tennessee's Partner lifted his head from the pillow, saying, "It is time to go for Tennessee; I must put 'Jinny' in the cart;" and would have risen from his bed but for the restraint of his attendant. Struggling, he still pursued his singular fancy: "There, now! Steady, 'Jinny'—steady, old girl! How dark it is! Look out for the ruts—and look out for him, too, old gal! Sometimes, you know, when he's blind drunk, he drops down right in the trail. Keep on straight up to the pine on the top of the hill. Thar—I told you so!—thar he is,—coming this way, too—all by himself, sober, and his face a-shining. Tennessee! Pardner!"

And so they met.

A BARRISTER'S BOY.

SYDNEY GRUNDY.

To the learned young men who are plying the pen
In the Temple, or Lincoln's, or Gray's,
I've a few words to say in a fatherly way
Concerning the world and its ways.

Whatever you've got, and whatever you've not,
And however your time you employ,
Be warned by my fate, if it isn't too late,
And have nothing to do with a boy.

Ah me, I remember, 'twas only December,
When comfort and peace were my lot:
I'd a couple of chairs at the top of some stairs,
And a terrible boy I had not.

I skipped up and down, and paraded the town,
With a conscience as light as a linnet's:
I affixed on the door of my back second floor—
"Mr. G. will return in ten minutes."

But it fell on a day—ah, it's always the way—
That I wasn't content with my fate;
And one night, for a lark, I went in for a clerk,
On my numerous clients to wait.

That identical night I extinguished the light
Of my life and the lamp of my joy;
And now, early and late on my soul is a weight,
In the shape of a terrible boy.

That lad is to me an Old Man of the Sea—
And if I'm to tell you the truth,
I shall ever regret the dread day when I met
That unique and remarkable youth.

It's not that he's bad: he's the best to be had:
His conduct is equalled by few;
But the whole of my life is one wearisome strife
To find that boy something to do.

If I send him on journeys to mystic attorneys,
He runs as if running a race;
If I keep him indoors, at his writing he pores
Till he's perfectly black in the face.

He's so awfully good, he does all that he should,
And nothing a little boy shouldn't:
It may be a shame, but I wish all the same
That phenomenal little boy wouldn't.

If he'd only be bad, like a sensible lad,
And idle, and dawdle, and play,
You can scarcely divine what delight would be mine,
For then I could send him away.

But alas, it's no use to desire an excuse
For turning him out of employ:
How could I for-shame to destroy the good name
Of that weird and exemplary boy?

I'm the man in the fable who found he was able
To fashion a monster, and did;
When his monster was made, for his folly he paid:
Of his monster he couldn't get rid.

I've just sent him out, a long errand about,
Which the whole of the day will employ—
There's a step on the stair—why, there's somebody there—
I'll be hanged if it isn't that boy!

(*By permission of the Author.*)

RICH AND POOR.

SAMUEL WARREN.

A REMARKABLE and affecting juxtaposition of the two poles, so to speak, of human condition—affluence and poverty—rank and degradation—came under my notice during the early part of the year 181—. The dispensations of Providence are fearful levellers of the factitious distinctions among men! Little boots it to our common foe, whether he pluck his prey from the downy satin-curtained couch, or the wretched pallet of a prison or a workhouse! The oppressive splendour of rank and riches, indeed!—what has it of solace or mitigation to him bidden "to turn his pale face to the wall"—to look his last on life, its toys and tinselries?

The Earl of ——'s old tormentor, the gout, had laid close siege to him during the early part of the winter of 181—, and inflicted on him agonies of unusual intensity and duration. It left him in a very low and poor state of health—his spirits utterly broken—and his temper soured and irritable, to an extent that was intolerable to those around him. The discussion of a political question, in the issue of which his interests were deeply involved, seduced him into an attendance at the House of Lords, long before he was in a fit state for removal, even from his bedchamber; and the consequences of such a shattered invalid's premature exposure to a bleak winter's wind may be easily anticipated. He was laid again on a bed of suffering; and

having, through some sudden pique, dismissed his old family physician, his Lordship was pleased to summon me to supply his place.

The Earl of —— was celebrated for his enormous riches and the more than Oriental scale of luxury and magnificence on which his establishment was conducted. The slanderous world further gave him credit for a disposition of the most exquisite selfishness, which, added to his capricious and choleric humour, made him a very unenviable companion, even in health. What, then, must such a man be in sickness? I trembled at the task that was before me! It was a bitter December evening on which I paid him my first visit. Nearly the whole of the gloomy, secluded street in which his mansion was situated, was covered with straw; and men were stationed about it to prevent noise in any shape. The ample knocker was muffled and the bell unhung, lest the noise of either should startle the aristocratical invalid. The instant my carriage, with its muffled roll, drew up, the hall-door sprang open, as if by magic; for the watchful porter had orders to anticipate all comers, on pain of instant dismissal. Thick matting was laid over the hall floor—double carpeting covered the staircases and landings, from the top to the bottom of the house—and all the door edges were lined with list. How could sickness and death presume to enter, in spite of such precautions!

A servant, in large list-slippers, asked me, in a whisper, my name; and, on learning it, said the Countess wished to have a few moments' interview with me, before I was shown up to his Lordship. I was, therefore, led into a magnificent apartment, where her Ladyship with two grown-up daughters, and a young man in the Guards' uniform, sat sipping coffee—for they had but just left the dining-room. The Countess looked pale and dispirited. "Doctor ——," said she, after a few words, of course, had been interchanged, "I'm afraid you'll have a trying task to manage his Lordship. We are all worn out with attending on him, and yet he says we neglect him! Nothing can please or satisfy him!—What do you imagine was the reason of his dismissing Dr. ——? Because he persisted in attributing the present seizure to his Lordship's imprudent visit to the House!"

"Well, your Ladyship knows I can but attempt to do my duty"—I was answering, when, at that instant, the door was opened, and a sleek servant, all pampered and powdered, in a *sotto voce* tone informed the Countess that his Lordship had been inquiring for me. "Oh, for God's sake, go—go immediately," said her Ladyship, eagerly, "or we shall have no peace for a week to come!—I shall, perhaps, follow you in a few minutes!—But mind—please, not a breath about Dr. ——'s leaving!" I bowed, and left the room. I followed the servant up the noble staircase—vases and statues, with graceful lamps at

every landing—and was presently ushered into the "Bluebeard" chamber. Oh, the sumptuous—the splendid air of everything within it! Flowered, festooned satin window-draperies—flowered satin bed-curtains, gathered together at the top by a golden eagle—flowered satin counterpane! Beautiful Brussels muffled the tread of your feet, and delicately-carved chairs and couches solicited to repose! The very chamber lamps, glistening in soft radiance from snowy marble stands in the further corners of the room, were tasteful and elegant in the extreme. In short, grandeur and elegance seemed to outvie one another, both in the materials and disposition of everything around me. I never saw anything like it before, nor have I since. I never in my life sat in such a yielding luxurious chair as the one I was beckoned to, beside the Earl. There was, in a word, everything calculated to cheat a man into a belief, that he belonged to a "higher order" than that of "poor humanity."

But for the Lord—the owner of all this—my patient. Ay, there he lay, embedded in down, amid snowy linen and figured satin—all that was visible of him being his little sallow wrinkled visage, worn with illness, age, and fretfulness, peering curiously at me from the depths of his pillow—and his left hand, lying outside the bed-clothes, holding a white embroidered handkerchief, with which he occasionally wiped his clammy features.

"U—u—gh! U—u—gh!" he groaned, or rather gasped, as a sudden twinge of pain twisted and corrugated his features almost out of all resemblance to humanity—till they looked more like those of a strangled ape, than the Right Honourable the Earl of ——. The paroxysm presently abated. "You've been —down-stairs—more than—five minutes—I believe—Dr. ——?" he commenced in a petulant tone, pausing for breath between every two words—his features not yet recovered from their contortions. I bowed.

"I flatter myself—it was *I*—who sent—for you, Dr. ——, and —not her Ladyship," he continued. I bowed again, and was going to explain, when he resumed.

"Ah! I see! Heard—the whole story of Dr. ——'s dismissal —ugh—ugh—eh!—May I—beg the favour—of hearing her *Ladyship's* version—of the affair?"

"My Lord, I heard nothing but the simple fact of Dr. ——'s having ceased to attend your Lordship——"

"Ah;—*ceased to attend!* Good!" he repeated, with a sneer.

"Will your Lordship permit me to ask if you have much pain just now?" I inquired, anxious to terminate his splenetic display. I soon discovered that he was in the utmost peril; for there was every symptom of the gout's having been driven from its old quarter—the extremities—to the vital organs, the stomach and bowels. One of the most startling symptoms was the sensation he described as resembling that of a platter of *ice* laid upon the pit of his stomach; and he complained also of increasing

nausea. Though not choosing to apprize him of the exact extent of his danger, I strove so to shape my questions and comments that he might infer his being in dangerous circumstances. He either did not, however, or would not comprehend me. I told him that the remedies I should recommend——

"Ah, by the way," said he, turning abruptly towards me, "it mustn't be the execrable stuff that Dr. —— half poisoned me with! 'Gad, sir—it had a most diabolical stench—garlic was a pine-apple to it—and here was I obliged to lie soaked in eau de Cologne, and half-stifled with musk. He did it on purpose—he had a spite against me!" I begged to be shown the medicines he complained of, and his valet brought me the half-emptied vial. I found my predecessor had been exhibiting *assafætida* and musk—and could no longer doubt the coincidence of his view of the case and mine.

"I'm afraid, my Lord," said I, hesitatingly, "that I shall find myself compelled to continue the use of the medicines which Dr. —— prescribed."

"I'll be —— if you *do*, though—that's all"— replied the Earl, continuing to mutter indistinctly some insulting words about my "small acquaintance with the *pharmacopœia*." I took no notice of it.

"Would your Lordship," said I, after a pause, "object to the use of camphor or ammonia?"

"I object to the use of every medicine but one, and that is a taste of some potted boar's flesh, which my nephew, I understand, has this morning sent from abroad."

"My Lord, it is utterly out of the question. Your Lordship, it is my duty to inform you, is in extremely dangerous circumstances——"

"The devil I am!" he exclaimed, with an incredulous smile. "Poh, poh! So Dr. —— said. According to him, I ought to have *resigned* about a week ago! Egad—but—but—what symptom of danger is there now?" he inquired, abruptly.

"Why, *one*—in fact, my Lord, the *worst* is—the sensation of numbness at the pit of the stomach, which your Lordship mentioned just now."

"Poh!—gone—gone—gone! A mere nervous sensation, I apprehend. I am freer from pain just now than I have been all along." His face changed a little. "Doctor—rather faint with talking—can I have a cordial? Pierre, get me some brandy!" he added, in a feeble voice. The valet looked at me—I nodded acquiescence, and he instantly brought the Earl a wine-glassful.

"Another—another—another"—gasped the Earl, his face suddenly bedewed with a cold perspiration. A strange expression flitted for an instant over the features; his eyelids drooped; there was a little twitching about the mouth——

"Pierre! Pierre! Pierre! call the Countess!" said I, hurriedly, loosening the Earl's shirt-neck, for I saw he was *dying*. Before

the valet returned, however, while the muffled tramp of footsteps was heard on the stairs, approaching nearer—nearer—nearer—it was all over! The haughty Earl of —— had gone where rank and riches availed him nothing—to be *alone with God!*

* * * * *

On arriving home that evening, my mind saddened with the scene I had left, I found my wife—Emily—sitting by the drawing-room fire, alone, and in tears. On inquiring the reason of it, she told me that a charwoman, who had been that day engaged at our house, had been telling Jane—my wife's maid—who, of course, communicated it to her mistress, one of the most heartrending tales of distress that she had ever listened to—that poverty and disease united could inflict on humanity. My sweet wife's voice, ever eloquent in the cause of benevolence, did not require much exertion to persuade me to resume my walking trim, and go that very evening to the scene of wretchedness she described. The charwoman had gone half an hour ago, but left the name and address of the family she spoke of, and, after learning them, I set off. The cold was so fearfully intense, that I was obliged to return and get a "comfortable" for my neck; and Emily took the opportunity to empty all the loose silver in her purse into my hand, saying, "You know what to do with it, love!" Blessing her benevolent heart, I once more set out on my errand of mercy. With some difficulty I found out the neighbourhood, threading my doubtful way through a labyrinth of obscure back-streets, lanes, and alleys, till I came to "Peter's Place," where the objects of my visit resided. I began to be apprehensive for the safety of my person and property, when I discovered the sort of neighbourhood I had got into.

"Do you know where some people of the name of O'Hurdle live?" I inquired of the watchman, who was passing bawling the hour.

"Yis, I knows *two* of that 'ere name hereabouts—which Hurdle is it, sir?" inquired the gruff guardian of the night.

"I really don't exactly know—the people I want are very, *very* poor."

"Oh! oh! oh! I'm thinking they're all much of a muchness for the matter of that, about here," he replied, setting down his lantern, and slapping his hands against his sides to keep himself warm.

"But the people I want are very *ill*—I'm a Doctor."

"Oh! oh! you must be meaning 'em 'oose son was transported yesterday! His name was Tim O'Hurdle, sir—though some called him Jimmy—and I was the man that catch'd him, sir, I did! It was for a robbery in this here——"

"Ay, ay—I dare say they are the people I want. Where is their house?" I inquired, hastily, somewhat disturbed at the latter portion of his intelligence—a new and forbidding feature of the case.

"I'll show'ee the way, sir," said the watchman, walking before me, and holding his lantern close to the ground to light my path. He led me to the last house of the Place, and through a miserable dilapidated door-way; then up two pair of narrow, dirty, broken stairs, till we found ourselves at the top of the house. He knocked at the door with the end of his stick, and called out, "Holloa, missus! Hey! Within there! You're wanted here!" adding suddenly, in a lower tone, touching his hat, "It's a bitter night, sir—a trifle, sir, to keep one's self warm—drink your health, sir." I gave him a trifle, motioned him away, and took his place at the door.

"Thank your honour!—mind your watch and pockets, sir, that's all," he muttered, and left me. I felt very nervous as the sound of his retreating footsteps died away downstairs. I had half a mind to follow him.

"Who's there?" inquired a female voice through the door, opened only an inch or two.

"It's I—a doctor. Is your name O'Hurdle? Is any one ill here? I'm come to see you. Betsy Jones, a charwoman, told me of you."

"You're right, sir," replied the same voice, sorrowfully. "Walk in, sir;" and the door was opened enough for me to enter.

Now, reader, who, while glancing over these sketches, are perhaps reposing in the lap of luxury, believe me when I tell you, that the scene which I shall attempt to set before you, as I encountered it, I feel to beggar all my powers of description; and that what you may conceive to be exaggerations, are infinitely short of the frightful realities of that evening. Had I not seen and known for myself, I should scarcely have believed that such misery existed.

"Wait a moment, sir, an' I'll fetch you a light," said the woman, in a strong Irish accent; and I stood still outside the door till she returned with a rushlight, stuck in a blue bottle. I had time for no more than one glimpse at the haggard features and filthy ragged appearance of the bearer, with an infant at the breast, before a gust of wind, blowing through an unstopped broken pane in the window, suddenly extinguished the candle, and we were left in a sort of darkness visible, the only object I could see being the faint glow of expiring embers on the hearth. "Would your honour be after standing still awhile, or you'll be thredding on the chilther?" said the woman; and, bending down, she endeavoured to relight the candle by the embers. The poor creature tried in vain, however; for it seemed there was but an inch or two of candle left, and the heat of the embers melted it away, and the wick fell out.

"Oh, murther—there! What *will* we do?" exclaimed the woman; "that's the last bit of candle we've in the house, an' it's not a farthing I have to buy another!"

"Come—send and buy another," said I, giving her a shilling, though I was obliged to *feel* for her hand.

"Oh, thank your honour!" said she, "an' we'll soon be seeing one another. Here, Sal! Sal! Sally!—Here, ye cratur!"

"Well, and what d'ye want with *me?*" asked a sullen voice from another part of the room, while there was a rustling of straw.

"Fait, an' ye must get up wid ye, and go to buy a candle. Here's a shilling——"

"Heigh—and isn't it a loaf o' bread ye should rather be after buying, mother?" growled the same voice.

"Perhaps the Doctor won't mind," stammered the mother; "he won't mind our getting a loaf, too."

"Oh, no, no! For God's sake, go directly, and get what you like!" said I, touched by the woman's tone and manner.

"Ho, Sal! Get up—ye may buy some bread, too——"

"Bread! bread! bread!—Where's the shilling?" said the same voice, in quick and eager tones; and the ember-light enabled me barely to distinguish the dim outline of a figure rising from the straw on which it had been stretched, and which nearly overturned me by stumbling against me on its way towards where the mother stood. It was a grown-up girl, who, after receiving the shilling, promised to bring the candle lighted, lest her own fire should not be sufficient, and withdrew, slamming the door violently after her, and rattling downstairs with a rapidity which showed the interest she felt in her errand.

"I'm sorry it's not a seat we have that's fit for you, sir," said the woman, approaching towards where I was standing; "but if I may make so bold as to take your honour's hand, I'll guide you to the only one we have—barring the floor—a box by the fire, and there ye'll sit perhaps till she comes with the light."

"Anywhere—anywhere, my good woman," said I; "but I hope your daughter will return soon, for I have not long to be here;" and, giving her my gloved hand, she led me to a deal box, on which I sat down, and she on the floor beside me. I was beginning to ask her some questions, when the moaning of a little child interrupted me.

"Hush! hush!—ye little divel—hush!—ye'll be waking your poor daddy!—hush!—go to sleep wid ye!" said the woman, in an earnest undertone.

"Och—och—mammy!—mammy! an' isn't it so *cowld?*—I *can't* sleep, mammy," replied the tremulous voice of a very young child; and, directing my eyes to the quarter from which the sound came, I fancied I saw a poor, shivering, half-naked creature, cowering under the window.

"Hist!—lie still wid ye, ye unfortunat' little divel—an' ye'll presently get something to eat. We ha'n't none of us tasted a morsel sin' the morning, Doctor!" The child she spoke to ceased its moanings instantly; but I heard the sound of its little teeth chattering, and of its hands rubbing and striking together. Well it might, poor wretch—for I protest the room

was nearly as cold as the open air—for, besides the want of fire, the bleak wind blew, in chilling gusts, through the broken panes of the window.

"Why, how many of you are there in this place, my good woman?" said I.

"Och, murther! murther! murther! and isn't there—barring Sal, that's gone for the candle, and Bobby, that's out begging, and Tim, that the ould divels at Newgate have sent away to *Bottomless* yesterday," she continued, bursting into tears;—"Och, an' won't that same be the death o' me, and the poor father o' the boy—an' it wasn't sich a sentence he deserved—but, hush! hush!" she continued, lowering her tone, "an' it's waking the father o' him, I'll be, that doesn't——"

"I understand your husband is ill," said I.

"Fait, sir, as ill as the 'smatticks (asthmatics) can make him—the Lord pity him! But he's had a blessed hour's sleep, the poor fellow! though the little brat he has in his arms has been making a noise—a little divel that it is—it's the youngest barring this one I'm suckling—an' it's not a fortnight it is sin' it first looked on its mother!" she continued, sobbing, and kissing her baby's hand. "Och, och! that the little cratur had niver been born!"

I heard footsteps slowly approaching the room; and presently a few rays of light flickered through the chinks and fissures of the door, which was in a moment or two pushed open, and Sal made her appearance, shading the lighted candle in her hand, and holding a quartern loaf under her arm. She had brought but a wretched rushlight, which she hastily stuck into the neck of the bottle, and placed it on a shelf over the fireplace; and then—what a scene was visible!

The room was a garret, and the sloping ceiling—if such it might be called—made it next to impossible to move anywhere in an upright position. The mockery of a window had not one entire pane of glass in it; but some of the holes were stopped with straw, rags, and brown paper, while one or two were not stopped at all! There was not an article of furniture in the place—no, not a bed, chair, or table of any kind; the last remains of it had been seized for arrears of rent—eighteenpence a week—by the horrid harpy, their landlady, who lived on the ground floor! The floor was littered with dirty straw, such as swine might scorn—but which formed the only couch of this devoted family! The rushlight eclipsed the dying glow of the few embers, so that there was not even the *appearance* of a fire! And *this* in a garret facing the north—on one of the bitterest and bleakest nights I ever knew! My heart sank within me at witnessing such frightful misery and destitution, and contrasting it, for an instant, with the aristocratical splendour, the exquisite luxuries, of my last patient! *Lazarus and Dives!*

The woman with whom I had been conversing was a mere

bundle of filthy rags—a squalid, shivering, starved creature, holding to her breast a half-naked infant—her matted hair hanging long and loosely down her back, and over her shoulders; her daughter Sal was in like plight—a sullen, ill-favoured slut of about eighteen, who seemed ashamed of being seen, and hung her head like a guilty one. She had resumed her former station on some straw—her bed!—in the extreme corner of the room, where she was squatting, with a little creature cowering close beside her, both munching ravenously the bread which had been purchased. The miserable father of the family was seated on the floor, with his back propped against the opposite side of the fireplace to that which I occupied, and held a child clasped loosely in his arms, though he had plainly fallen asleep. Oh, what a wretched object! a foul, shapeless, brown-paper cap on his head, and a ragged fustian jacket on his back, which a beggar might have spurned with loathing!

The sum of what the woman communicated to me was, that her husband, a bricklayer by trade, had been long unable to work on account of his asthma; and that their only means of subsistence were a paltry pittance from the parish, her own scanty earnings as a washerwoman, which had been interrupted by her recent confinement, and charities collected by Sal and Bobby, who was then out begging. Their oldest son, Tim, a lad of sixteen, had been transported for seven years, the day before, for a robbery of which his mother vehemently declared him innocent; and this last circumstance had, more than all the rest, completely broken the hearts of both his father and mother, who had absolutely starved themselves and their children, in order to hoard up enough to fee an Old Bailey counsel to plead for their son! The husband had been for some time, I found, an out-patient of one of the infirmaries; "and this poor little *darlint*," said she, sobbing bitterly, and hugging her infant closer to her, "has got the measles, I'm fearin'; and little Bobby, too, is catching them.—Och murther, murther! Oh, Christ, pity us, poor sinners that we are! Oh! what will we do?—what will we do?"—and she almost choked herself with stifling her sobs, for fear of waking her husband.

"And what is the matter with the child that your husband is holding in his arms!" I inquired, pointing to it, as it sat in its father's arms, munching a little crust of bread, and ever and anon patting its father's face, exclaiming, "Da-a-a!—Ab-bab-ba!—Ab-bab-ba!"

"Och! what ails the cratur? Nothing, but that it's half-starved and naked—an' isn't that enough—an' isn't it *kilt* I wish we all were—every mother's son of us!" groaned the miserable woman, sobbing as if her heart would break. At that moment, a lamentable noise was heard on the stairs, as of a lad crying, accompanied by the pattering of naked feet. "Och! murther!" exclaimed the woman, with an agitated air—"What's ailing

with Bobby? Is it crying he is?" and, starting to the door, she threw it open time enough to admit a ragged shivering urchin, about ten years old, without shoes or stockings, and having no cap, and rags pinned about him, which he was obliged to hold up with his right hand, while the other covered his left cheek. The little wretch, after a moment's pause, occasioned by seeing a strange gentleman in the room, proceeded to put three or four coppers into his mother's lap, telling her, with painful gestures, that a gentleman whom he had followed a few steps in the street, importuning for charity, had turned round unexpectedly, and struck him a severe blow with a cane, over his face and shoulders.

"Let me look at your face, my poor little fellow," said I, drawing him to me; and, on removing his hand, I saw a long weal all down the left cheek. I wish I could forget the look of tearless agony with which his mother put her arms round his neck, and drawing him to her breast, exclaimed faintly—"Bobby!—my Bobby!" After a few moments, she released the boy, pointing to the spot where his sisters sat, still munching their bread. The instant he saw what they were doing, he sprang towards them, and plucked a large fragment from the loaf, fastening on it like a young wolf!

"Why, they'll finish the loaf before you've tasted it, my good woman," said I.

"Och, the poor things!—Let them—let them!" she replied, wiping away a tear. "I can do without it longer than they—the craturs!"

"Well, my poor woman," said I, "I have not much time to spare, as it is growing late. I came here to see what I could do for you as a doctor. How many of you are ill?"

"Fait, an' isn't ailing we all of us are! Ah, your honour!—A 'firmary, without physic or victuals!"

"Well, we must see what can be done for you. What is the matter with your husband there," said I, turning towards him. He was still asleep, in spite of the tickling and stroking of his child's hands, who, at the moment I looked, was trying to push the corner of its crust into its father's mouth, chuckling and crowing the while, as is the wont of children who find a passive subject for their drolleries.

"Och! och! the little villain!—the thing!" said she, impatiently, seeing the child's employment; "isn't it waking him it'll be?—st—st!"

"Let me see him nearer," said I; "I *must* wake him, and ask him a few questions."

I moved from my seat towards him. His head hung down drowsily. His wife took down the candle from the shelf, and held it a little above her husband's head, while I came in front of him, and stooped on one knee to interrogate him.

"Phelim!—love!—honey!—darlint!—Wake wid ye! And

isn't it the doctor that comes to see ye?" said she, nudging him with her knee. He did not stir, however. The child, regardless of us, was still playing with his passive features. A glimpse of the awful truth flashed across my mind.

"Let me have the candle a moment, my good woman," said I, rather seriously.

The man was dead!

He must have expired nearly an hour before, for his face and hands were quite cold; but the position in which he sat, together with the scantiness of the light, concealed the event. It was fearful to see the ghastly pallor of the features, the fixed pupils, the glassy glare downwards, the fallen jaw!—Was it not a subject for a painter?—the living child in the arms of its dead father, unconsciously sporting with a corpse!

* * * * * * *

To attempt a *description* of what ensued, would be idle, and even ridiculous. It is hardly possible even to imagine it! In one word, the neighbours who lived on the floor beneath were called in, and did their utmost to console the wretched widow and quiet the children. They laid out the corpse decently; and I left them all the silver I had about me, to enable them to purchase a few of the more pressing necessaries. I succeeded afterwards in gaining two of the children admittance into a charity-school; and through my wife's interference, the poor widow received the efficient assistance of an unobtrusive, but most incomparable institution, "*The Strangers' Friend Society.*" I was more than once present when those angels of mercy—those "true Samaritans"—the "Visitors" of the Society, as they are called—were engaged on their noble errand, and wish that their numbers were countless, and their means inexhaustible!

(*From* "THE DIARY OF A LATE PHYSICIAN.")

THE DEMON TRAGEDIAN.

WALTER PARKE.

THERE'S some one who lives in the attic,
Whose tastes are intensely dramatic;
'Tis little I'd mind
If he were not inclined,
So much to be over-emphatic.

He plays all the leading creations,
Goes in for terrific sensations,
To hear his Macbeth,
Nearly frightens to death
Myself and my friends and relations.

He says that he means to "dissemble,"
He calls upon tyrants to "tremble,"
He grunts and he growls,
And he howls and he scowls,
And thinks he's Macready or Kemble.

When he struggles to imitate Irving
On *me* the effect is unnerving,
I murmur "Oh! oh!
"Don't torture me so,
"Of this I am quite undeserving!"

In tragedy, high and romantic,
His efforts are truly gigantic;
Of sleep he deprives me,
And nightly he drives me
As nearly as possible frantic.

His comedy's sad and depressing,
He's better at cursing than blessing;
A ponderous "curse"
In stilted blank verse
From him is intensely distressing.

No public would ever endure him,
They'd throw rotten apples to floor him—
They'd jump on the stage,
And drag him in rage
Away, and in Hanwell immure him.

When weary of playing "Othello,"
He tortures a violoncello;
He sings out of tune,
Serenades to the moon,
In a basso or baritone bellow.

He plays on a crazy harmonium
And something he calls a "trombonium,"
And then—oh, my stars!—
How he twangs at guitars,
And blows a detested euphonium.

He shakes the whole house, and just under
His room, it sounds louder than thunder;
And why the police
Don't force him to cease,
To me is a matter of wonder.

I've made every effort to stop him,
In pieces I wish I could chop him;
Or, milder resource—
I'd take him by force,
And out of the window I'd drop him!

I'd send a last message imploring
He'd leave off his ranting and roaring,
Not stamp overhead
With elephant tread,
As if he would come through the flooring.

But, bless you, he never would mind me;
Some day "suicided" you'll find me,
Unless I take flight
In the dead of the night
And leave that tragedian behind me!

(*By permission of the Author.*)

THE HABITS OF THE SWALLOW.

REV. GILBERT WHITE.

THE house-swallow, or chimney-swallow, is undoubtedly the first comer of all the British hirundines; and appears on or about the thirteenth of April, as I have remarked from many years' observation. Not but now and then a straggler is seen much earlier; and, in particular, when I was a boy I observed a swallow for a whole day together on a sunny warm Shrove-Tuesday; which day could not fall out later than the middle of March, and often happened early in February.

It is worth remarking that these birds are seen first about lakes and mill-ponds; and it is also very particular, that if these early visitors happen to find frost and snow, as was the case of the two dreadful springs of 1770 and 1771, they immediately withdraw for a time,—a circumstance this much more in favour of hiding than migration; since it is much more probable that a bird should retire to its hybernaculum just at hand than return for a week or two only to warmer latitudes.

The swallow, though called the chimney-swallow, by no means builds altogether in chimneys, but often within barns and outhouses against the rafters; and so she did in Virgil's time:

"Antè
Garrula quam tignis nidos suspendat hirundo."

In Sweden she builds in barns, and is called *landu swala*, the barn-swallow. Besides, in the warmer parts of Europe there are no chimneys to houses except they are English built: in these countries she constructs her nest in porches, and gateways, and galleries, and open halls.

Here and there a bird may affect some odd, peculiar place; as we have known a swallow build down the shaft of an old well, through which chalk had been formerly drawn up for the purpose of manure; but in general with us this hirundo breeds

in chimneys, and loves to haunt those stacks where there is a constant fire, no doubt for the sake of warmth. Not that it can subsist in the immediate shaft where there is a fire ; but prefers one adjoining to that of the kitchen, and disregards the perpetual smoke of that funnel, as I have often observed with some degree of wonder.

Five or six or more feet down the chimney does this little bird begin to form her nest about the middle of May, which consists, like that of the house-martin, of a crust or shell composed of dirt or mud, mixed with short pieces of straw to render it tough and permanent ; with this difference, that whereas the shell of the martin is nearly hemispheric, that of the swallow is open at the top, and like half a deep dish : this nest is lined with fine grasses and feathers, which are often collected as they float in the air.

Wonderful is the address which this adroit bird shows all day long in ascending and descending with security through so narrow a pass. When hovering over the mouth of the funnel, the vibrations of her wings acting on the confined air occasion a rumbling like thunder. It is not improbable that the dam submits to this inconvenient station so low in the shaft, in order to secure her broods from rapacious birds, and particularly from owls, which frequently fall down chimneys, perhaps in attempting to get at these nestlings.

The swallow lays from four to six white eggs, dotted with red specks ; and brings out her first brood about the last week in June or the first week in July. The progressive method by which the young are introduced into life is very amusing ; first they emerge from the shaft with difficulty enough, and often fall down into the rooms below : for a day or so they are fed on the chimney-top, and then are conducted to the dead leafless bough of some tree, where, sitting in a row, they are attended with great assiduity, and may then be called perchers. In a day or two more they become flyers, but are still unable to take their own food ; therefore, they play about near the place where the dams are hawking for flies ; and, when a mouthful is collected, at a certain given signal, the dam and the nestling advance, rising towards each other, and meeting at an angle, the young one all the while uttering such a little quick note of gratitude and complacency that a person must have paid very little regard to the wonders of Nature that has not often remarked this feat.

The dam betakes herself immediately to the business of a second brood as soon as she is disengaged from her first; which at once associates with the first broods of house-martins ; and with them congregates, clustering on sunny roofs, towers, and trees. This hirundo brings out her second brood towards the middle and end of August.

All the summer long is the swallow a most instructive pattern of unwearied industry and affection ; for, from morning to night,

while there is a family to be supported, she spends the whole day in skimming close to the ground, and exerting the most sudden turns and quick evolutions. Avenues, and long walks under hedges, and pasture-fields, and mown meadows where cattle graze, are her delight, especially if there are trees interspersed; because in such spots insects most abound. When a fly is taken, a smart snap from her bill is heard, resembling the noise at the shutting of a watch-case; but the motions of the mandibles are too quick for the eye.

The swallow, probably the male bird, is the excubator to house-martins, and other little birds, announcing the approach of birds of prey. For, as soon as a hawk appears, with a shrill alarming note he calls all the swallows and martins about him; who pursue in a body, and buffet and strike their enemy till they have driven him from the village, darting down from above on his back, and rising in a perpendicular line in perfect security. This bird also will sound the alarm, and strike at cats when they climb on the roofs of houses, or otherwise approach the nests. Each species of hirundo drinks as it flies along, sipping the surface of the water; but the swallow alone, in general, washes on the wing, by dropping into a pool for many times together: in very hot weather house-martins and bank-martins dip and wash little.

The swallow is a delicate songster, and in soft summer weather sings both perching and flying: on trees in a kind of concert, and on chimney tops; is also a bold flyer, ranging to distant downs and commons even in windy weather, which the other species seem much to dislike; nay, even frequenting exposed sea-port towns, and making little excursions over the salt water. Horsemen on wide downs are often closely attended by a little party of swallows for miles together, which plays before and behind them, sweeping round, and collecting all the sculking insects that are roused by the trampling of the horses' feet: when the wind blows hard, without this expedient, they are often forced to settle to pick up their lurking prey.

This species feeds much on little *coleoptera*, as well as on gnats and flies; and often settles on dug ground, or paths, for gravels, to grind and digest its food. Before they depart, for some weeks, to a bird they forsake houses and chimneys, and roost in trees; and usually withdraw about the beginning of October; though some few stragglers may appear on at times till the first week in November.

Some few pairs haunt the new and open streets of London next the fields, but do not enter, like the house-martins, the close and crowded parts of the city.

Both male and female are distinguished from their congeners by the length and forkedness of their tails. They are undoubtedly the most nimble of all the species; and when the male pursues the female in amorous chase, they then go beyond

their usual speed, and exert a rapidity almost too quick for the eye to follow.

A certain swallow built for two years together on the handles of a pair of garden-shears, that were stuck up against the boards in an outhouse, and therefore must have had her nest spoiled whenever that implement was wanted; and, what is stranger still, another bird of the same species built its nest on the wings and body of an owl that happened to hang dead and dry from the rafters of a barn. This owl, with the nest on its wings, and with eggs in the nest, was brought as a curiosity worthy the most elegant private museum in Great Britain. The owner, struck with the oddity of the sight, furnished the bringer with a large shell, or conch, desiring him to fix it just where the owl hung: the person did as he was ordered, and the following year a pair, probably the same pair, built their nest in the conch and laid their eggs.

Thus is instinct in animals, taken the least out of its way, an undistinguishing, limited faculty; and blind to every circumstance that does not immediately respect self-preservation, or lead at once to the propagation or support of their species.

(*From "The Natural History of Selborne."*)

A FIRST-CLASS ADDRESS.

LEOPOLD WAGNER.

I LIVE in an attic not far from the sky,
In a house that's not homely, nor tidy, nor clean;
The street is the dingiest one could descry:
Such pent-up monotony never was seen.
No carriages rattle along the dull road,
Fine costumes on ladies' fair forms never bless
The sight of the dweller within this abode,
Which has yet one virtue—a first-class address.

How proudly I gaze on my letters addressed
To *Thirteen A, Fiddle Street, Hot-Codlin Square!*
It sounds so euphonious; and then too, it's *West*,
And that makes my friends deferentially stare.
I pay for my privilege dearly, I know;
A nice little home somewhere *North* would cost less;
Still, modern existence demands outward show,
And I, at least, fancy—a first-class address!

Of grievances many, but one to detail:
My landlady apes the tyrannical sort,
And every week's end I've to pay on the nail,
Or under her roof-tree my stay would be short.

No comforts domestic I ever enjoy ;
My solitude's wretched, I'm forced to confess ;
For all that, reflection affords some alloy—
For I live in a house with a first-class address.

Of course, I can't say that of Hot-Codlin Square
And Fiddle Street proper the neighbourhoods meet :
Quite half a mile distant they are—I declare ;
Still most of my neighbours employ the deceit.
Of all West-End Squares it's the grandest, I'm told :
What wealth and what luxury doth it profess !
So, much though I suffer—I feel I'm enrolled
In the eyes of the world at a first-class address !

(*By permission of* MESSRS. CASSELL & CO.)

BOB SAWYER'S PARTY.

CHARLES DICKENS.

THERE is a repose about Lant Street, in the Borough, which sheds a gentle melancholy upon the soul. There are always a good many houses to let in the street : it is a bye-street too, and its dulness is soothing. A house in Lant Street would not come within the denomination of a first-rate residence, in the strict acceptation of the term ; but it is a most desirable spot, nevertheless. If a man wished to abstract himself from the world, to remove himself from within the reach of temptation, to place himself beyond the possibility of any inducement to look out of the window, we should recommend him by all means to go to Lant Street.

In this happy retreat are colonised a few clear-starchers, a sprinkling of journeymen bookbinders, one or two prison-agents for the Insolvent Court, several small housekeepers who are employed in the docks, a handful of mantua-makers, and a seasoning of jobbing tailors. The majority of the inhabitants either direct their energies to the letting of furnished apartments, or devote themselves to the healthful and invigorating pursuit of mangling. The chief features in the still life of the street are green shutters, lodging-bills, brass door-plates, and bell-handles ; the principal specimens of animated nature, the pot-boy, the muffin youth, and the baked-potato man. The population is migratory, usually disappearing on the verge of quarter-day, and generally by night. His Majesty's revenues are seldom collected in this happy valley, the rents are dubious, and the water communication is very frequently cut off.

Mr. Bob Sawyer embellished one side of the fire, in his first-

floor front, early on the evening for which he had invited Mr. Pickwick ; and Mr. Ben Allen the other. The preparations for the reception of visitors appeared to be completed. The umbrellas in the passage had been heaped into the little corner outside the back-parlour door ; the bonnet and shawl of the landlady's servant had been removed from the banisters ; there were not more than two pair of pattens on the street door-mat ; and a kitchen candle, with a very long snuff, burnt cheerfully on the ledge of the staircase window. Mr. Bob Sawyer had himself purchased the spirits at a wine-vault in High Street, and had returned home preceding the bearer thereof, to preclude the possibility of their delivery at the wrong house. The punch was ready made in a red pan in the bedroom : a little table covered with a green baize cloth, had been borrowed from the parlour, to play at cards on ; and the glasses of the establishment, together with those which had been borrowed for the occasion from the public-house, were all drawn up in a tray, which was deposited on the landing outside the door. Notwithstanding the highly satisfactory nature of all these arrangements, there was a cloud on the countenance of Mr. Bob Sawyer as he sat by the fireside. There was a sympathising expression, too, in the features of Mr. Ben Allen, as he gazed intently on the coals ; and a tone of melancholy in his voice, as he said, after a long silence—"Well, it *is* unlucky that she should have taken it into her head to turn sour just on this occasion. She might at least have waited till to-morrow."—"That's her malevolence ; that's her malevolence," returned Mr. Bob Sawyer vehemently. "She says that if I can afford to give a party, I ought to be able to afford to pay her confounded 'little bill.'"—"How long has it been running?" inquired Mr. Ben Allen. A bill, by-the-bye, is the most extraordinary locomotive engine that the genius of man ever produced. It would keep on running during the longest lifetime, without ever once stopping of its own accord. "Only a quarter, and a month or so," replied Mr. Bob Sawyer.—Ben Allen coughed hopelessly, and directed a searching look between the two top bars of the stove.—"It'll be a deuced unpleasant thing if she takes it into her head to let out when those fellows are here, won't it?" said Mr. Ben Allen at length.—"Horrible," replied Mr. Bob Sawyer, "horrible."

A low tap was heard at the room door. Mr. Bob Sawyer looked expressively at his friend, and bade the tapper come in ; whereupon a dirty slipshod girl in black cotton stockings, who might have passed for the neglected daughter of a superannuated dustman in very reduced circumstances, thrust in her head, and said—"Please, Mister Sawyer, Missis Raddle wants to speak to you."

Before Mr. Bob Sawyer could return any answer, the girl suddenly disappeared with a jerk, as if somebody had given her a violent pull behind ; this mysterious exit was no sooner accom-

plished than there was another tap at the door—a smart pointed tap, which seemed to say, "Here I am, and in I'm coming."

Mr. Bob Sawyer glanced at his friend with a look of abject apprehension, and once more cried "Come in."—The permission was not at all necessary, for before Mr. Bob Sawyer had uttered the words, a little fierce woman bounced into the room, all in a tremble with passion, and pale with rage.—"Now, Mr. Sawyer," said the little fierce woman, trying to appear very calm, "if you'll have the kindness to settle that little bill of mine, I'll thank you, because I've got my rent to pay this afternoon, and my landlord's a-waiting below now." Here the little woman rubbed her hands and looked steadily over Mr. Bob Sawyer's head at the wall behind him.—"I am very sorry to put you to any inconvenience, Mrs. Raddle," said Bob Sawyer, deferentially, "but——"—"Oh, it isn't any inconvenience," replied the little woman, with a shrill titter. "I didn't want it particular before to-day; leastways, as it has to go to my landlord directly, it was as well for you to keep it as me. You promised me this afternoon, Mr. Sawyer, and every gentleman as has ever lived here has kept his word, sir, as, of course, anybody as calls himself a gentleman does." And Mrs. Raddle tossed her head, bit her lips, rubbed her hands harder, and looked at the wall more steadily than ever. It was plain to see, as Mr. Bob Sawyer remarked in a style of eastern allegory on a subsequent occasion, that she was "getting the steam up."—"I am very sorry, Mrs. Raddle," said Bob Sawyer, with all imaginable humility, "but the fact is that I have been disappointed in the City to-day."—Extraordinary place that City. We know a most astonishing number of men who always are getting disappointed there.—"Well, Mr. Sawyer," said Mrs. Raddle, planting herself firmly on a purple cauliflower, in the Kidderminster carpet, "and what's that to me, sir?"—"I—I—have no doubt, Mrs. Raddle," said Bob Sawyer, blinking this last question, "that before the middle of next week we shall be able to set ourselves quite square, and go on a better system afterwards."

This was all Mrs. Raddle wanted. She had bustled up to the apartment of the unlucky Bob Sawyer so bent upon going into a passion, that in all probability payment would have rather disappointed her than otherwise. She was in excellent order for a little relaxation of the kind, having just exchanged a few introductory compliments with Mr. R. in the front kitchen.

"Do you suppose, Mr. Sawyer," said Mrs. Raddle, elevating her voice for the information of her neighbours, "do you suppose that I'm a-going day after day to let a fellar occupy my lodgings as never thinks of paying his rent, nor even the very money laid out for the fresh butter and lump sugar that's bought for his breakfast, and the very milk that's took in at the street door? Do you suppose a hard-working and industrious woman as has lived in this street for twenty years (ten years over the way, and

nine years and three-quarters in this very house) has nothing else to do but to work herself to death after a parcel of lazy, idle fellars, that are always smoking, and drinking, and lounging, when they ought to be glad to turn their hands to anything that would help 'em to pay their bills? Do you——"—"My good soul," interposed Mr. Benjamin Allen, soothingly.—"Have the goodness to keep your observashuns to yourself, sir, I beg," said Mrs. Raddle, suddenly arresting the rapid torrent of her speech, and addressing the third party with impressive slowness and solemnity. "I am not aweer, sir, that you have any right to address your conversation to me. I don't think I let these apartments to you, sir."—"No, you certainly did not," said Mr. Benjamin Allen.—"Very good, sir," responded Mrs. Raddle, with lofty politeness. "Then p'raps, sir, you'll confine yourself to breaking the arms and legs of the poor people in the hospitals, and keep yourself *to* yourself, sir, or there may be some persons here as will make you, sir."—"But you are such an unreasonable woman," remonstrated Mr. Benjamin Allen.—"I beg your parding, young man," said Mrs. Raddle, in a cold perspiration of anger. "But will you have the goodness just to call me that again, sir?"—"I didn't make use of the word in any invidious manner, ma'am," replied Mr. Benjamin Allen, growing somewhat uneasy on his own account.—"I beg your parding, young man," demanded Mrs. Raddle, in a louder and more imperative tone, "but who do you call a woman? Did you make that remark to me, sir?"—"Why, bless my heart," said Mr. Benjamin Allen.—"Did you apply that name to me, I ask of you, sir?" interrupted Mrs. Raddle with intense fierceness, throwing the door wide open.—"Why, of course I did," replied Mr. Benjamin Allen.—"Yes, of course you did," said Mrs. Raddle, backing gradually to the door, and raising her voice to its loudest pitch, for the special behoof of Mr. Raddle in the kitchen. "Yes, of course you did, and everybody knows that they may safely insult me in my own 'ouse while my husband sits sleeping downstairs, and taking no more notice than if I was a dog in the streets. He ought to be ashamed of himself (here Mrs. Raddle sobbed) to allow his wife to be treated in this way by a parcel of young cutters and carvers of live people's bodies, that disgraces the lodgings (another sob), and leaving her exposed to all manner of abuse, a base, faint-hearted, timorous wretch, that's afraid to come upstairs, and face the ruffinly creatures—that's afraid—that's afraid to come." Mrs. Raddle paused to listen whether the repetition of the taunt had roused her better half; and, finding that it had not been successful, proceeded to descend the stairs with sobs innumerable, when there came a loud double knock at the street door; whereupon she burst into an hysterical fit of weeping, accompanied with dismal moans, which was prolonged until the knock had been repeated six times, when, in an uncontrollable burst of mental agony, she threw down all the

umbrellas, and disappeared into the back parlour, closing the door after her with an awful crash.

"Does Mr. Sawyer live here?" said Mr. Pickwick, when the door was opened.—"Yes," said the girl, "first floor. It's the door straight afore you when you gets to the top of the stairs." Having given this instruction, the handmaid, who had been brought up among the aboriginal inhabitants of Southwark, disappeared with a candle in her hand down the kitchen stairs, perfectly satisfied that she had done everything that could possibly be required of her under the circumstances. Mr. Snodgrass, who entered last, secured the street door, after several ineffectual efforts, by putting up the chain; and the friends stumbled upstairs, where they were received by Mr. Bob Sawyer, who had been afraid to go down lest he should be waylaid by Mrs. Raddle.

"How are you?" said the discomfited student—"Glad to see you—take care of the glasses." This caution was addressed to Mr. Pickwick, who had put his hat in the tray.—"Dear me," said Mr. Pickwick, "I beg your pardon."—"Don't mention it, don't mention it," said Bob Sawyer, "I'm rather confined for room here, but you must put up with all that when you come to see a young bachelor. Walk in. You've seen this gentleman before, I think." Mr. Pickwick shook hands with Mr. Benjamin Allen, and his friends followed his example. They had scarcely taken their seats when there was another double knock.

"I hope that's Jack Hopkins," said Mr. Bob Sawyer. "Hush. Yes, it is. Come up, Jack; come up."

A heavy footstep was heard upon the stairs, and Jack Hopkins presented himself. He wore a black velvet waistcoat, with thunder-and-lightning buttons; and a blue striped shirt, with a white false collar.

"You're late, Jack," said Mr. Benjamin Allen.—"Been detained at Bartholomew's," replied Hopkins—"Anything new?"—"No, nothing particular. Rather a good accident brought into the casualty ward."—"What was that, sir?" inquired Mr. Pickwick. —"Only a man fallen out of a four pair of stairs window—but it's a very fair case—very fair case indeed."—"Do you mean that the patient is in a fair way to recover?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.—"No," replied Hopkins, carelessly. "No, I should rather say he wouldn't. There must be a splendid operation, though, to-morrow—magnificent sight if Slasher does it." "You consider Mr. Slasher a good operator?" said Mr. Pickwick.—"Best alive," replied Hopkins. "Took a boy's leg out of the socket last week —boy ate five apples and a gingerbread cake exactly two minutes after it was all over—boy said he wouldn't lie there to be made game of, and he'd tell his mother if they didn't begin."—"Dear me," said Mr. Pickwick, astonished.—"Pooh! that's nothing, that ain't," said Jack Hopkins. "Is it, Bob?"—"Nothing at all," replied Mr. Bob Sawyer.—"By the bye, Bob," said

Hopkins, with a scarcely perceptible glance at Mr. Pickwick's attentive face, "we had a curious accident last night. A child was brought in who had swallowed a necklace."—"Swallowed what, sir?" interrupted Mr. Pickwick.—"A necklace," replied Jack Hopkins. "Not all at once, you know, that would be too much—*you* couldn't swallow that, if the child did—eh, Mr. Pickwick, ha! ha!"—Mr. Hopkins appeared highly gratified at his own pleasantry, and continued—"No, the way was this; —child's parents were poor people who lived in a court. Child's eldest sister bought a necklace—common necklace, made of large black wooden beads. Child, being fond of toys, cribbed the necklace, hid it, played with it, cut the string, and swallowed a bead. Child thought it capital fun, went back next day, and swallowed another bead."—"Bless my heart," said Mr. Pickwick, "what a dreadful thing. I beg your pardon, sir. Go on." —"Next day, child swallowed two beads; the day after that he treated himself to three, and so on, till in a week's time he had got through the necklace, five-and-twenty beads in all. The sister, who was an industrious girl, and seldom treated herself to a bit of finery, cried her eyes out at the loss of the necklace; looked high and low for it, but I needn't say, didn't find it. A few days afterwards, the family were at dinner—baked shoulder of mutton and potatoes under it—the child, who wasn't hungry, was playing about the room, when suddenly there was heard a devil of a noise, like a small hailstorm. 'Don't do that, my boy,' said the father. 'I ain't a doin' nothing,' said the child. 'Well, don't do it again,' said the father. There was a short silence, and then the noise began again, worse than ever. 'If you don't mind what I say, my boy,' said the father, 'you'll find yourself in bed, in something less than a pig's whisper.' He gave the child a shake to make him obedient, and such a rattling ensued as nobody ever heard before. 'Why, damme, it's *in* the child!' said the father; 'he's got the croup in the wrong place.' 'No, I haven't, father,' said the child, beginning to cry, 'it's the necklace; I swallowed it, father.' The father caught the child up, and ran with him to the hospital, the beads in the boy's stomach rattling all the way with the jolting; and the people looking up in the air, and down in the cellars to see where the unusual sound came from. He's in the hospital now," said Jack Hopkins, "and he makes such a devil of a noise when he walks about, that they're obliged to muffle him in a watchman's coat, for fear he should wake the patients."—"That's the most extraordinary case I ever heard of," said Mr. Pickwick, with an emphatic blow on the table.—"Oh, that's nothing," said Jack Hopkins, "is it, Bob?"—"Certainly not," replied Mr. Bob Sawyer.—"Very singular things occur in our profession, I can assure you, sir," said Hopkins.—"So I should be disposed to imagine," replied Mr. Pickwick.

Another knock at the door announced a large-headed young

man in a black wig, who brought with him a scorbutic youth in a long stock. The next comer was a gentleman in a shirt emblazoned with pink anchors, who was closely followed by a pale youth with a plated watchguard. The arrival of a prim personage in clean linen and cloth-boots rendered the party complete. The little table with the green baize cover was wheeled out; the first instalment of punch was brought in, in a white jug; and the succeeding three hours were devoted to *vingt-un*, at sixpence a dozen, which was once only interrupted by a slight dispute between the scorbutic youth and the gentleman with the pink anchors; in the course of which, the scorbutic youth intimated a burning desire to pull the nose of the gentleman with the emblems of hope, in reply to which that individual expressed his decided unwillingness to accept of any "sauce" on gratuitous terms, either from the irascible young gentleman with the scorbutic countenance, or any other person who was ornamented with a head.

When the last "natural" had been declared, and the profit and loss account of fish and sixpences adjusted to the satisfaction of all parties, Mr. Bob Sawyer rang for supper, and the visitors squeezed themselves into corners while it was getting ready. It was not so easily got ready as some people may imagine. First of all, it was necessary to awaken the girl, who had fallen asleep with her face on the kitchen table; this took a little time, and, even when she did answer the bell, another quarter of an hour was consumed in fruitless endeavours to impart to her a faint and distinct glimmering of reason. The man to whom the order for the oysters had been sent had not been told to open them; it is a very difficult thing to open an oyster with a limp knife or a two-pronged fork, and very little was done in this way. Very little of the beef was done either; and the ham (which was also from the German sausage shop round the corner) was in a similar predicament. However, there was plenty of porter in a tin can, and the cheese went a great way, for it was very strong. So upon the whole, perhaps, the supper was quite as good as such matters usually are. After supper another jug of punch was put upon the table, together with a paper of cigars, and a couple of bottles of spirits. Then there was an awful pause; and this awful pause was occasioned by a very common occurrence in these sort of places, but a very embarrassing one notwithstanding. The fact is, that the girl was washing the glasses. The establishment boasted four; we do not record the circumstance as at all derogatory to Mrs. Raddle, for there never was a lodging-house yet that was not short of glasses. The landlady's glasses were little thin brown glass tumblers, and those which had been borrowed from the public-house were great, dropsical, bloated articles, each supported on a huge gouty leg. This would have been in itself sufficient to have possessed the company with the real state of

affairs ; but the young woman of all work had prevented the possibility of any misconception arising in the mind of any gentleman upon the subject, by forcibly dragging every man's glass away, long before he had finished his beer, and audibly stating, despite the winks and interruptions of Mr. Bob Sawyer, that it was to be conveyed downstairs, and washed forthwith.

It is a very ill wind that blows nobody any good. The prim man in the cloth boots, who had been unsuccessfully attempting to make a joke during the whole time the round game lasted, saw his opportunity, and availed himself of it. The instant the glasses disappeared he commenced a long story about a great public character, whose name he had forgotten, making a particularly happy reply to another eminent and illustrious individual, whom he had never been able to identify. He enlarged at some length and with great minuteness upon divers collateral circumstances, distinctly connected with the anecdote in hand, but for the life of him he couldn't recollect at that precise moment what the anecdote was, although he had been in the habit of telling the story with great applause for the last ten years.

"Dear me," said the prim man in the cloth boots, "it is a very extraordinary circumstance."—"I am sorry you have forgotten it," said Mr. Bob Sawyer, glancing eagerly at the door, as he thought he heard the noise of glasses jingling—"very sorry."—"So am I," responded the prim man, "because I know it would have afforded so much amusement. Never mind ; I daresay I shall manage to recollect it in the course of half an hour or so."

The prim man arrived at this point just as the glasses came back, when Mr. Bob Sawyer, who had been absorbed in attention during the whole time, said he should very much like to hear the end of it, for, so far as it went, it was, without exception, the very best story he had ever heard. The sight of the tumblers restored Bob Sawyer to a degree of equanimity which he had not possessed since his interview with his landlady. His face brightened up, and he began to feel quite convivial.

"Now, Betsy," said Mr. Bob Sawyer, with great suavity, and dispersing, at the same time, the tumultuous little mob of glasses that the girl had collected in the centre of the table ; "now, Betsy, the warm water ; be brisk, there's a good girl."—"You can't have no warm water," replied Betsy.—"No warm water!" exclaimed Mr. Bob Sawyer.—"No," said the girl, with a shake of the head, which expressed a more decided negative than the most copious language could have conveyed. "Missis Raddle said you warn't to have none."

The surprise depicted on the countenance of his guests imparted new courage to the host.

"Bring up the warm water instantly—instantly!" said Mr. Bob Sawyer, with desperate sternness."—"No ; I can't," replied the girl ; "Missis Raddle raked out the kitchen fire afore she

went to bed, and locked up the kittle."—"Oh, never mind, never mind. Pray don't disturb yourself about such a trifle," said Mr. Pickwick, observing the conflict of Bob Sawyer's passions, as depicted in his countenance, "cold water will do very well."—"Oh, admirably," said Mr. Benjamin Allen.—"My landlady is subject to some slight attacks of mental derangement," remarked Bob Sawyer, with a ghastly smile; "I fear I must give her warning."—"No, don't," said Ben Allen.—"I fear I must," said Bob, with heroic firmness. "I'll pay her what I owe her, and give her warning to-morrow morning." Poor fellow! how devoutly he wished he could!

Mr. Bob Sawyer's heart-sickening attempts to rally under this last blow communicated a dispiriting influence to the company, the greater part of whom, with the view of raising their spirits, attached themselves with extra cordiality to the cold brandy and water, the first perceptible effects of which were displayed in a renewal of hostilities between the scorbutic youth and the gentleman in the sanguine shirt. The belligerents vented their feelings of mutual contempt, for some time, in a variety of frownings and snortings, until at last the scorbutic youth felt it necessary to come to a more explicit understanding on the matter, when the following clear understanding took place:—

"Sawyer," said the scorbutic youth, in a loud voice.—"Well, Noddy," replied Mr. Bob Sawyer.—"I should be very sorry, Sawyer," said Mr. Noddy, "to create any unpleasantness at any friend's table, and much less at yours, Sawyer—very; but I must take this opportunity of informing Mr. Gunter that he is no gentleman."—"And *I* should be very sorry, Sawyer, to create any disturbance in the street in which you reside," said Mr. Gunter, "but I'm afraid I shall be under the necessity of alarming the neighbours by throwing the person who has just spoken out of the window."—"What do you mean by that, sir?" inquired Mr. Noddy.—"What I say, sir," replied Mr. Gunter.—"I should like to see you do it, sir," said Mr. Noddy.—"You shall *feel* me do it in half a minute, sir," replied Mr. Gunter.—"I request that you'll favour me with your card, sir," said Mr. Noddy.—"I'll do nothing of the kind, sir," replied Mr. Gunter.—"Why not, sir?" inquired Mr. Noddy.—"Because you'll stick it up over your chimney-piece, and delude your visitors into the false belief that a gentleman has been to see you, sir," replied Mr. Gunter.—"Sir, a friend of mine shall wait on you in the morning," said Mr. Noddy.—"Sir, I'm very much obliged to you for the caution, and I'll leave particular directions with the servant to lock up the spoons," replied Mr. Gunter.

At this point, the remainder of the guests interposed, and remonstrated with both parties on the impropriety of their conduct, on which Mr. Noddy begged to state that his father was quite as respectable as Mr. Gunter's father; to which Mr. Gunter replied that his father was to the full as respectable as Mr. Noddy's father, and that his father's son was as good a man

as Mr. Noddy, any day in the week. As this announcement seemed the prelude to a recommencement of the dispute, there was another interference on the part of the company; and a vast quantity of talking and clamouring ensued, in the course of which Mr. Noddy gradually allowed his feelings to overpower him, and professed that he had ever entertained a devoted personal attachment towards Mr. Gunter. To this, Mr. Gunter replied that, upon the whole, he rather preferred Mr. Noddy to his own brother; on hearing which admission Mr. Noddy magnanimously rose from his seat, and proffered his hand to Mr. Gunter. Mr. Gunter grasped it with affecting fervour; and everybody said that the whole dispute had been conducted in a manner which was highly honourable to both parties concerned.

"Now," said Jack Hopkins, "just to set us going again, Bob, I don't mind singing a song." And Hopkins, incited thereto by tumultuous applause, plunged himself at once into "The King, God bless him," which he sang as loud as he could, to a novel air, compounded of the "Bay of Biscay," and "A Frog he would." The chorus was the essence of the song, and, as each gentleman sang it to the tune he knew best, the effect was very striking indeed. It was at the end of the chorus to the first verse, that Mr. Pickwick held up his hand in a listening attitude, and said, as soon as silence was restored—

"Hush! I beg your pardon. I thought I heard somebody calling from upstairs."

A profound silence immediately ensued; and Mr. Bob Sawyer was observed to turn pale.

"I think I hear it now," said Mr. Pickwick. "Have the goodness to open the door." The door was no sooner opened than all doubt on the subject was removed.

"Mr. Sawyer—Mr. Sawyer," screamed a voice from the two-pair landing.—"It's my landlady," said Bob Sawyer, looking round him with great dismay. "Yes, Mrs. Raddle."—"What do you mean by this, Mr. Sawyer?" replied the voice with great shrillness and rapidity of utterance. "Ain't it enough to be swindled out of one's rent and money lent out of pocket be-sides, and abused and insulted by your friends that dares to call themselves men, without having the house turned out of window, and noise enough made to bring the fire-engines here, at two o'clock in the morning? Turn them wretches away."—"You ought to be ashamed of yourselves," said the voice of Mr. Raddle, which appeared to proceed from beneath some distant bed-clothes.—"Ashamed of themselves!" said Mrs. Raddle. "Why don't you go down and knock 'em every one down-stairs! You would if you was a man."—"I should if I was a dozen men, my dear," replied Mr. Raddle, pacifically; "but they have rather the advantage of me in numbers, my dear."—"Ugh, you coward!" replied Mrs. Raddle, with supreme contempt. "*Do* you mean to turn them wretches out, or not, Mr. Sawyer?"—"They're going, Mrs. Raddle, they're going," said the miserable

Bob. "I am afraid you'd better go," said Mr. Bob Sawyer to his friends. "I *thought* you were making too much noise."—"It's a very unfortunate thing," said the prim man. "Just as we were getting so comfortable, too!" The fact was that the prim man was just beginning to have a dawning recollection of the story he had forgotten.—"It's hardly to be borne," said the prim man, looking round. "Hardly to be borne; is it?"—"Not to be endured," replied Jack Hopkins; "let's have the other verse, Bob; come, here goes." "No, no, Jack; don't," interposed Bob Sawyer; "it's a capital song, but I am afraid we had better not have the other verse. They are very violent people, the people of the house."—"Shall I step upstairs, and pitch into the landlord?" inquired Hopkins, "or keep on ringing the bell, or go and groan on the staircase? You may command me, Bob."—"I am very much indebted to you for your friendship and good nature, Hopkins," said the wretched Mr. Bob Sawyer, "but I think the best plan to avoid any further dispute is for us to break up at once."—"Now, Mr. Sawyer," screamed the shrill voice of Mrs. Raddle, "*are* them brutes going?"—"They're only looking for their hats, Mrs. Raddle," said Bob; "they are going directly."—"Going!" said Mrs. Raddle, thrusting her night-cap over the banisters just as Mr. Pickwick, followed by Mr. Tupman, emerged from the sitting-room. "Going! What did they ever come for?"—"My dear ma'am," remonstrated Mr. Pickwick, looking up.—"Get along with you, you old wretch," replied Mrs. Raddle, hastily withdrawing the night-cap. "Old enough to be his grandfather, you villin. You're worse than any of 'em."

Mr. Pickwick found it in vain to protest his innocence, so hurried down-stairs into the street, whither he was closely followed by Mr. Tupman, Mr. Winkle, and Mr. Snodgrass. Mr. Ben Allen, who was dismally depressed with spirits and agitation, accompanied them as far as London Bridge, and in the course of the walk confided to Mr. Winkle, as an especially sensible person to entrust the secret to, that he was resolved to cut the throat of any gentleman except Mr. Bob Sawyer, who should aspire to the affections of his sister Arabella. Having expressed his determination to perform this painful duty of a brother with proper firmness, he burst into tears, knocked his hat over his eyes, and, making the best of his way back, knocked double knocks at the door of the Borough Market, and took short naps on the steps alternately till daybreak, under the firm impression that he lived there, and had forgotten the key.

The visitors having all departed, in compliance with the rather pressing request of Mrs. Raddle, the luckless Mr. Bob Sawyer was left alone to meditate on the probable events of the morrow, and the pleasures of the evening.

TO A STUDENT IN GREAT POVERTY.

PHILIP GILBERT HAMERTON.

As it seems to me that to make light of the difficulties which lie in the path of another is not to show true sympathy for him, even though it is done sometimes out of a sort of awkward kindness and for his encouragement, I will not begin by pretending that poverty is not a great obstacle to the perfection of the intellectual life. It *is* a great obstacle; it is one of the very greatest of all obstacles. Only observe how riches and poverty operate upon mankind in the mass. Here and there, no doubt, a very poor man attains intellectual distinction, when he has exceptional strength of will, and health enough to bear a great strain of extra labour that he imposes upon himself, and natural gifts so brilliant that he can learn in an hour what common men learn in a day. But consider mankind in the mass. Look, for instance, at our two houses of Parliament. They are composed of men taken from the average run of Englishmen, with very little reference to ability, but almost all of them are rich men; not one of them is poor, as you are poor; not one of them has to contend against the stern realities of poverty. Then consider the very high general level of intellectual attainment which distinguishes those two assemblies, and ask yourself candidly whether a thousand men taken from the beggars in the streets, or even from the far superior class of our manufacturing operatives, would be likely to understand the many complicated questions of legislation and of policy which are continually brought before them. We all know that the poor are too limited in knowledge and experience, from the want of the necessary opportunities, and too little accustomed to exercise their minds in the tranquil investigations of great questions, to be competent for the work of Parliament. It is scarcely necessary to insist upon this fact to an Englishman, because the English have always recognised the natural connection between culture and wealth, and have preferred to be governed by the rich, from the belief that they are likely to be better informed, and better situated for intellectual activity of a disinterested kind, than those members of the community whose time and thoughts are almost entirely occupied in winning their daily bread by the incessant labour of their hands. And if you go out into the world, if you mix with men of very different classes, you will find that in a broad average (I am not speaking just now of the exceptions), the richer classes are much more capable of entering into the sort of thinking which may be called intellectual than those whose money is less plentiful, and whose opportunities have, therefore, been less abundant. Indeed, it may be asserted, roughly and generally, that the narrowness of men's ideas is in direct proportion to

their parsimony in expenditure. I do not mean to affirm that all who spend largely attain large intellectual results, for of course we know that a man may spend vast sums on pursuits which do not educate him in anything worth knowing, but the advantage is that with habits of free expenditure the germs of thought are well tilled and watered, whereas parsimony denies them every external help. The most spending class in Europe is the English gentry; it is also the class most strikingly characterised by a high general average of information; the most parsimonious class in Europe is the French peasantry; it is also the class most strikingly characterised by ignorance and intellectual apathy. The English gentlemen has cultivated himself by various reading and extensive travel, but the French peasant will not go anywhere except to the market-town, and could not pardon the extravagance of buying a book, or a candle to read it by in the evening. Between these extremes we have various grades of the middle classes in which culture usually increases very much in proportion to the expenditure. The rule is not without its exceptions; there are rich vulgar people who spend a great deal without improving themselves at all—who only, by unlimited self-indulgence, succeed in making themselves uncomfortably sensitive to every bodily inconvenience that they have no leisure, even in the midst of an unoccupied life, to think of anything but their own bellies and their own skins—people whose power of attention is so feeble that the smallest external incident distracts it, and who remember nothing of their travels but a catalogue of trivial annoyances. But people of this kind do not generally belong to families on whom wealth has had time to produce its best effects. What I mean is, that a family which has been for generations in the habit of spending four thousand a year will usually be found to have a more cultivated tone than one that has only spent four hundred.

I have come to the recognition of this truth very reluctantly indeed, not because I dislike rich people, but merely because they are necessarily a very small minority, and I should like every human being to have the best benefits of culture if it were only possible. The plain living and high thinking that Wordsworth so much valued is a cheering ideal, for most men have to live plainly, and if they could only think with a certain elevation, we might hope to solve the great problem of human life, the reconciliation of poverty and the soul. There certainly is a slow movement in that direction, and the shortening of the hours of labour may afford some margin of leisure; but we who work for culture every day, and all day long, and still feel that we know very little, and have hardly skill enough to make any effective use of the little that we know, can scarcely indulge in very enthusiastic anticipations of the future culture of the poor.

Still, there are some things that may be rationally and truly said to a poor man who desires culture, and which are not without a sort of Spartan encouragement. You are restricted by your poverty, but it is not always a bad thing to be restricted, even from the intellectual point of view. The intellectual powers of well-to-do people are very commonly made ineffective by the enormous multiplicity of objects that are presented to their attention, and which claim from them a sort of polite notice, like the greeting of a great lady to each of her thousand guests. It requires the very rarest strength of mind, in a rich man, to concentrate his attention on anything—there are so many things that he is expected to make a pretence of knowing; but nobody expects *you* to know anything, and that is an incalculable advantage. I think that all poor men who have risen to subsequent distinction have been greatly indebted to this independence of public opinion as to what they ought to know. In trying to satisfy that public opinion by getting up a pretence of various sorts of knowledge, which is only a sham, we sacrifice not only much precious time, but we blunt our natural interest in things. That interest you preserve in all its virgin force, and this force carries a man far. Then, again, although the opportunities of rich people are very superior to yours, they are not altogether so superior as they seem. There exists a great equalising power, the limitation of human energy. A rich man may sit down to an enormous banquet, but he can only make a good use of the little that he is able to digest. So it is with the splendid intellectual banquet that is spread before the rich man's eyes. He can only possess what he has energy to master, and too frequently the manifest impossibility of mastering everything produces a feeling of discouragement that ends in his mastering nothing. A poor student, especially if he lives in an out-of-the-way place, where there are no big libraries to bewilder him, may apply his energy with effect in the study of a few authors.

I used to believe a great deal more in opportunities, and less in application, than I do now. Time and health are needed, but with these there are always opportunities. Rich people have a fancy for spending money very uselessly on their culture because it seems to them more valuable when it has been costly; but the truth is, that by the blessing of good and cheap literature, intellectual light has become almost as accessible as daylight. I have a rich friend who travels more, and buys more costly things than I do, but he does not really learn more or advance further in the twelvemonth. If my days are fully occupied, what has he to set against them? only other well-occupied days, no more. If he is getting benefit at St. Petersburg, he is missing the benefit I am getting round my house and in it. The sum of the year's benefit seems to be surprisingly alike in both cases. So if you are reading a piece of

thoroughly good literature, Baron Rothschild may possibly be as well occupied as you—he is certainly not better occupied. When I open a noble volume I say to myself, "Now the only Crœsus that I envy is he who is reading a better book than this."

(*From* "THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE," *by permission of* Messrs. MACMILLAN & CO.)

MUSINGS IN WILFORD CHURCHYARD.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

HERE would I wish to sleep.—This is the spot
Which I have long mark'd out to lay my bones in ;
Tired out and wearied with the riotous world,
Beneath this Yew I would be sepulchred.
It is a lovely spot ! The sultry sun,
From his meridian height, endeavours vainly
To pierce the shadowy foliage, while the zephyr
Comes wafting gently o'er the rippling Trent,
And plays about my wan cheek. 'Tis a nook
Most pleasant. Such a one perchance, did Gay
Frequent, as with a vagrant muse he wanton'd.
Come, I will sit me down and meditate,
For I am wearied with my summer's walk ;
And here I may repose in silent ease ;
And thus, perchance, when life's sad journey's o'er,
My harass'd soul, in this same spot, may find
The haven of its rest—beneath this sod
Perchance may sleep it, sweetly, sound as death.
I would not have my corpse cemented down
With brick and stone, defrauding the poor earth-worm
Of its predestined dues ; no, I would be
Beneath a little hillock, grass o'ergrown,
Swathed down with osiers, just as sleep the cottiers.
Yet may not *undistinguish'd* be my grave ;
But there at eve may some congenial soul
Duly resort, and shed a pious tear,
The good man's benison—no more I ask.
And oh ! (if heavenly beings may look down
From where, with cherubim, inspired they sit,
Upon this little dim-discover'd spot,
The earth,) then will I cast a glance *below*,
On him who thus my ashes shall embalm ;
And I will weep too, and will bless the wanderer,
Wishing he may not long be doom'd to pine
In this low-thoughted world of darkling woe,
But that, ere long, he reach his kindred skies.

Yet, 'twas a silly thought, as if the body,
Mouldering beneath the surface of the earth,
Could taste the sweets of summer scenery,
And feel the freshness of the balmy breeze!
Yet nature speaks within the human bosom,
And, spite of reason, bids it look beyond
His narrow verge of being, and provide
A decent residence for its clayey shell,
Endear'd to it by time. And who shall lay
His body in the city burial-place,
To be thrown up again by some rude sexton,
And yield its narrow house another tenant,
Ere the moist flesh had mingled with the dust,
Ere the tenacious hair had left the scalp,
Exposed to insult lewd, and wantonness?
No, I will lay me in the *village* ground;
There are the dead respected. The poor hind,
Unlettered as he is, would scorn to invade
The silent resting-place of death. I've seen
The labourer, returning from his toil,
Here stay his steps, and call his children round,
And slowly spell the rudely sculptured rhymes,
And in his rustic manner, moralize.
I've mark'd with what a silent awe he'd spoken,
With head uncover'd, his respectful manner,
And all the honours which he paid the grave,
And thought on cities, where even cemeteries,
Bestrew'd with all the emblems of mortality,
Are not protected from the drunken insolence
Of wassailers profane, and wanton havoc.
Grant, Heaven, that here my pilgrimage may close!
If, this it be denied, where'er my bones
May lie—or in the city's crowded bounds,
Or scatter'd wide o'er the huge sweep of waters,
Or left a prey on some deserted shore
To the rapacious cormorant,—yet still,
(For why should sober reason cast away
A thought which soothes the soul?) yet still my spirit
Shall wing its way to these my native regions,
And hover o'er this spot. Oh, then I'll think
Of times when I was seated 'neath this yew
In solemn rumination; and will smile
With joy that I have got my long'd release.

A JOURNEY TO SIBERIA.

HUGH CONWAY.

IT was midsummer when I left St. Petersburgh. The heat was oppressive, and quite disturbed my idea of the Russian climate. I went by rail to Moscow, by the iron road which runs straight as a line from one large city to the other. The Czar ordered it to be so made without curves or deviations. When the engineers asked him what populous places they should take on their way, his Imperial Majesty took a ruler and on the map ruled a straight line from St. Petersburgh to Moscow. "Make it so," were his commands, and so it was made, as rigid and careless of the convenience of other persons as his own despotism—a railway for some four hundred miles running simply to its destination, not daring, however much tempted, to swerve aside, and disobey the autocrat's commands.

At Moscow, the colossal, I lingered a couple of days. It was there I had settled to engage a guide and interpreter. As I spoke two or three languages besides my own, I was able to pick and choose, and, at last, selected a pleasant-mannered, sharp-looking young fellow, who averred that he knew every inch of the great post-road to the east. Then bidding farewell to the mighty Kremlin, with its churches, watch towers, and battlements, I started with my new companion for Nijnei Novgorod; at which place we must bid adieu to the railway.

We passed the old picturesque, but decaying town of Vladimar, and after duly admiring its five-domed cathedral, I found nothing more to distract my attention until we reached Nijnei. My companion was very anxious that we should linger for a day or two at this city. The great fair was on, and he assured me it was a sight not to be missed. I had not come to Russia to look at fairs or festivities, so commanded him to make instant preparations for continuing the journey.

We now changed our mode of conveyance. Being summer, the rivers were open and navigation practicable. We took the steamer and went down the broad Volga till we passed Kasan and reached the river Kama. Up this tortuous stream we went until we landed at the large important town of Perm.

We were five days on the water—I think the five longest days I ever spent. The winding river, the slow-going steamer, made me long for the land again; there one seemed to be making progress. The road there was straight, not running into a hundred bends.

We were now nearly at the end of Europe. A hundred miles further and we shall cross the Ural Mountains, and be in Asiatic Russia.

At Perm we made our final preparations. From now we must depend on post-horses. Ivan, my guide, after the proper amount

of haggling, bought a tarantass—a sort of phaeton. The luggage was stowed into it; we took our seats; our first relay of horses were engaged—three in number, and harnessed in the peculiar Russian fashion—the yemschik started them with the words of encouragement and endearment which, in Russia, are supposed to be more efficacious than the thong, and away we went on our long, long drive.

We crossed the Urals, which, after all, are not so very high. We passed the stone obelisk erected, Ivan told me, in honour of a Cossack chief named Termak. We read the words "Europe" on the side which first met our eyes, and turning round saw "Asia" written on the back. I spent my first night in Asia at Ekaterineburg, and lay awake the best part of it trying to calculate how many miles stretched between Pauline and myself. For days and days have passed since I left St. Petersburg, and I have travelled at all possible speed; yet the journey seems scarcely begun. Indeed, I cannot even guess at its length until I get to Tobolsk.

A trifle of some four hundred miles from Ekaterineburg to Tiumen, another of two hundred from Tiumen to Tobolsk, and I shall await the pleasure of the Governor-General, and what information he may choose to give me.

The carriage and ourselves are ferried across the broad yellow Irtuish—that river, the crossing of which by a Russian officer at once raises him a step in rank: for such is the inducement held out to serve in Siberia; and at the east bank of the Irtuish Siberia proper begins.

Tobolsk at last! The sight of my passports rendered the Governor civility itself. He invited me to dine with him, and, as for prudential reasons I thought it better to accept his invitation, treated me royally. His register told me all I wanted to know about Ceneri. He had been sent to the very extreme of the Czar's dominions, as his was a case which called for special severity. Where he would finish his journey was not settled, but that made little difference to me. As he would travel the greater part of the way on foot, and as there was but one road, I must overtake him, although he left Tobolsk months ago. The escort which accompanied that particular gang of prisoners was under the command of Captain Varlámoff, to whom his Excellency would write a few lines which I should take with me—he would also give me a supplementary passport signed by himself.

"Where do you think I shall overtake the party?" I asked.

The Governor made a calculation. "Somewhere about Irkutsk," he thought.

And Irkutsk two thousand miles, more or less, from Tobolsk!

I bade the great man a grateful adieu, and spurred on at such speed that even the good-tempered Ivan began to grumble. Man, even a Russian, was but mortal, he said, and I could not expect to find Arab steeds among Government post-horses

which the post-masters were compelled to furnish at about twopence a mile a horse. I left the yemschik and himself no time for refreshment. Their tea had not grown cool enough to swallow before I was insisting on a fresh start. And as for a proper night's rest !

Tea ! Until I made that journey I never knew the amount of tea a mortal stomach could hold. One and all they drank it by the gallon. They carried it about compressed into bricks, cemented, I heard with a shudder, by sheep's or some other animal's blood. They drank it morn, noon, and night. Whenever there was a stoppage and boiling water could be obtained, bucketsful of tea were made and poured down their throats.

The impressions I retain of that long journey are not very deep. I was not traversing the country for the sake of writing a book of travels, or to observe the manners and customs of the people. My great object was to overtake Ceneri as quickly as possible, and my endeavours were directed to passing from one posting-station to another as swiftly as I could. We sped over vast steppes, wild marshes, through forests of birch, tall pines, oak, ash, and other trees; we were ferried over broad rivers. On and on we went, as straight to our destination as the great post-road would take us. When nature forced us to rest, we had to put up with such pitiful accommodation as we could get. Unless the place at which we stopped was of some importance, inns were unknown. By dint of practice I at last contrived to obtain almost enough sleep, if not to satisfy me, to serve my needs, whilst jolting along in the tarantass.

It was a monotonous journey. I turned aside to visit no objects of interest spoken of by travellers. From morn to night, and generally through the greater part of the night, our wheels rolled along the road. And at every posting-station I read on the wooden post which stands in front of it the number of miles we were from St. Petersburg, until, as the days and weeks passed, I began to feel appalled at the distance I had come, and the distance I must return. Should I ever see Pauline again ? Who can say what may have happened before I return to England? At times I grew quite dispirited.

I think what made me realise the length of the journey even more than the days or measured miles, was to see, as we went on, the country people gradually changing their costume and dialect. The yemschiks who drove us changed in appearance and in nationality ; the very breed of the horses varied. But let man or cattle be of what kind they would, we were well and skilfully conducted.

The weather was glorious, almost too glorious. The cultivated country we passed through looked thriving and productive. Siberia was very different in appearance from what is usually associated with its name. The air, when not too warm, was simply delicious. Never have I breathed a more invigorating

and bracing atmosphere. There were days when the breeze seemed to send new life through every vein.

The people I thought fairly honest, and whenever I found a need of producing my papers, the word civility will scarcely express the treatment I received. How I should have been treated without these potent talismans I cannot say.

The whole countryside in most places was busy with the hay-harvest; a matter of such importance to the community at large, that convicts are told off for some six weeks to assist in the work of saving the crops. The wild flowers, many of them very beautiful, grew freely; the people looked well and contented. Altogether my impressions of Siberia in summer were pleasant ones.

Yet I wished it had been the dead of winter. Then it is that, in spite of the cold, one travels more pleasantly. Ivan assured me that when a good snow-road is formed, and a tarantass may be exchanged for a sledge, the amount of ground passed over in a day is something marvellous. I am afraid, from memory, to say how many miles may be covered in twenty-four hours when the smooth-going runners take the place of wheels.

We had, of course, various small accidents and delays on the road. However strongly built a tarantass may be, it is but mortal. Wheels broke, axletrees gave way, shafts snapped, twice we were overturned; but as no evil except delay ensued, I need not relate the history of these misfortunes.

Nor need I enumerate the towns and villages through which we passed, unless I wished to make my story as interesting as a scriptural genealogy—Tara, Kainsk, Koliuvan, Tomsk, Achinsk, Krasnoyarsk, Nijnei, Udinsk, may or may not be familiar to the reader, according to the depths of his geographical studies; but most of the others, even if I knew how to spell their names, would be nothing more than vain sounds. Perhaps, when we trace the march of the Russian army destined to invade our Indian Empire, we may become better acquainted with the Czar's Asiatic dominions.

Yet at the entrance to each of these little towns or villages, the very names of which I have forgotten, so surely as you found the well-appointed posting-station, you found also a gloomy square building, varying with the size of the place, surrounded by a tall palisade, the gates of which were barred, bolted, and sentried—these buildings were the ostrogs, or prisons.

Here it was that the wretched convicts were housed as they halted on their long march. In these places they were packed like sardines in a box. Prisons built to hold two hundred were often called upon to accommodate at least twice that number of luckless wretches. I was told that when ice was breaking up in the rivers; when the floods were out; when, in fact, the progress must perforce be delayed, the scenes at these prisons, or depots, beggared description. Men, sometimes unsexed women with

them, huddled into rooms reeking with filth, the floors throwing out poisonous emanations—rooms built to give but scanty place to a small number, crowded to suffocation. The mortality at times was fearful. The trials of the march were as nothing when compared to the horrors of the so-called rest. And it was in one of these ostrogs I should find Ceneri!

We passed many gangs of convicts plodding along to their fate. Ivan told me that most of them were in chains. This I should not have noticed, as the irons are only on the legs, and worn under the trousers. Poor wretched beings, my heart ached for them! Felons though they were, I could never refuse the charity they invariably prayed for. So far as I could see, they were not unkindly treated by the soldiers and officers, but terrible tales were told me about their sufferings at the hands of inhuman jailors and commandants of prisons. There, for the slightest infraction of rules, the rod, the dark cell, and a variety of other punishments were called into play.

I always felt relieved when we had passed out of sight of a gang like this. The contrast between my own position, and that of such a number of my fellow men, was too painful to contemplate—and yet, if Ceneri did not clear away every shadow from my mind, I might retrace my steps a more miserable wretch than either of those footsore convicts.

Some week or ten days after leaving Tobolsk I began to make enquiries at every ostrog as to when Captain Varlámoff's gang passed, and when I might expect to overtake it. The answers I received to the latter question corresponded with that given me by the governor—all agreed at Irkutsk, or just beyond. Day after day I found we were gaining rapidly upon the party, and when at last we reached the large handsome town of Irkutsk, I rightly reckoned that I had reached the end, or nearly the end, of my journey.

On inquiry, I found Captain Varlámoff had not yet arrived. At the place where I had last enquired, I had been told he had passed through a day before, so it was evident we had overlooked and outstripped them. The best thing to be done was to await in Irkutsk the arrival of the party.

I was not at all sorry to take a couple of days' rest after my fatigues. I was not sorry to indulge once more in the comforts of comparative civilization; yet nearly every hour I was sending down to enquire if the convicts had arrived. More ardently than had I longed to reach Irkutsk, I longed to turn the horses' heads westwards and start on the return journey.

I had no news from home since I left St. Petersburg. Indeed, I could never expect a letter, as, after my departure from Nijnei Novgorod, I had positively outstripped the post. On the road home I hoped to find letters awaiting me.

After I had kicked my heels in Irkutsk for two days I received the welcome news that Captain Varlámoff had marched

his prisoners to the ostrog at four o'clock that afternoon. I rose from my dinner and went with all speed to the prison.

A man in plain clothes—a civilian—demanding to be conducted to the presence of a Russian captain, who had just arrived from a long march, seemed almost too great a joke for the sentries to bear in a soldier-like manner. Their stolid faces broke into scornful smiles as they asked Ivan if "the little father" had gone quite mad. It required much firmness, much persuasion, and a gratuity, which to the simple military mind represented an unlimited quantity of "vodka," and consequently many happy drinking-bouts, before I was allowed to pass through the gates of the high palisade, and, with many misgivings on the part of my guide, was conducted to the presence of the Captain.

A fine, fierce-looking young soldier, who glared at me for disturbing him; for having, by advice, adopted the Russian costume, which by now was stained and frayed by travel, there was nothing to show him I was not a civilian whom any soldier might kick at his pleasure.

It was delightful to see the change the perusal of the Tobolsk governor's letter made in the Captain's appearance. He rose, and with the greatest courtesy offered me a chair, and asked me in French if I spoke that language.

I assured him on that point, and finding I could dispense with Ivan's services, sent him outside to wait for me.

Varlámoff would not hear of commencing business until wine and cigarettes made their appearance—then he was at my service in anything and everything.

I told him what I desired.

"To speak in private with one of my convicts, certainly, this letter places me at your commands. But which convict?"

I gave him the true name. He shook his head.

"I know none of them by that name. Most of the names the political prisoners pass under are false ones, when they leave me they will become numbers, so it doesn't matter."

I suggested Ceneri. He shook his head again.

"I know the man I want is with you," I said. "How shall I find him?"

"You know him by sight?"

"Yes—well."

"Then you had better come with me and try and pick him out among my unfortunates. Light another cigarette—you will want it," he added, with meaning.

He led the way, and soon we stood before a heavy door. At his command, a jailor, armed with mighty keys, appeared. The grinding locks were turned, and the door was opened.

"Follow me," said Varlámoff, with a long pull at his cigarette. I obeyed, and, standing on the threshold, had much ado to keep from fainting.

From the stench which rushed through it, that open door might have been the entrance to some pestilential cavern at the bottom of which all the impurities of the world were rotting and putrefying. As it passed you, you felt that the thick air was poisonous with disease and death.

I recovered myself as best I could, and followed my guide into the grim interior. The door closed behind us.

Had I the power to describe the sights I saw when my eyes grew accustomed to the gloom, I should not be believed. The prison was spacious, but, when the number of the prisoners was considered, it should have been three times the size. It was thronged with wretched beings. They were standing, sitting, and lying about. Men of all ages, and, it seemed, of all nationalities. Men with features of the lowest human type. They were huddled in groups, cursing and swearing. Moved by curiosity, they pressed around us as closely as they dared, laughing and jabbering in their barbarous dialects. I was in a hell, an obscene, unclean hell! a hell made by men for their fellow-men.

Filth! the place was one mass of it. Filth under foot, filth on the walls, the rafters and the beams—filth floating about in the hot, heavy, pestiferous air. Each man seemed to be a moving mass of filth. Zola would revel in a minute description of the horrors of that place, but I must leave them to the imagination, although I know and even trust that no one's imagination can come near the reality.

The only thing I could think of was this. Why did not these men rush out, overpower the guards, and escape from this reeking den? I put the question to Varlámoff.

"They never attempt to escape whilst on the march," he said "It is a point of honour among them. If one escapes, those left are treated with much greater severity."

"Do none ever get away?"

"Yes, many do when they are sent to the works. But it does them no good. They must pass through the towns on their flight, or they would starve. Then they are always caught and sent back."

I was peering into all the faces about, trying to find the one I sought. My inspection was received with looks sullen, suspicious, defiant, or careless. Remarks were made in undertones, but Varlámoff's dreaded presence kept me from insult. I examined many groups without success, then I made a tour of the prison.

All along the wall was a slanting platform upon which men lay in various attitudes. Being the most comfortable station, every inch of it was covered by recumbent forms. In the angle formed by the prison walls I saw a man reclining, as if utterly worn out. His head sank down upon his breast, his eyes were closed. There was something in his figure which struck me as

familiar. I walked to him and laid my hand upon his shoulder. He opened his weary eyes, and raised his sad face. It was Manuel Ceneri!

(*From* "CALLED BACK," *by permission of* MR. J. W. ARROWSMITH.)

A PROFITABLE INVESTMENT.

DR. STRAUSS.

"WHAT! Solomon Isaacs, *you* buying sentry-boxes! What can you possiby want with them?"

Now, in the first place I would have the benevolent reader understand that this is a true story. This preliminary declaration I am led to make by a natural apprehension lest, from the circumstance that I appear here among a set of professed fictionists and inverate jokers, the authenticity of the facts narrated by me should be called in question—which would deeply wound my feelings, as I am a serious writer, with whom strict adherence to truth has always been a strong point.

As a truthful chronicler, then, I must at once admit that Solomon Isaacs was not the name of the man. Why call him so then? Simply because there are branches of the family still extant, some of them in London, who haply might reasonably object to publicity being given to their distinguished relative's real name in connection with some of his sharp deeds. The pseudonym chosen is intended as a delicate compliment to my friend Farjeon.

"What can you want with such a lot of old sentry-boxes, Solomon Isaacs?" repeated Aaron Beer, the great Hebrew banker of Berlin, who, accidentally looking in at a public sale of condemned army stores in the capital of Geist on the Spree, was just in time to hear his old friend Solomon Isaacs make a successful bid of something like ten shillings apiece for a lot of eighty worn-out old sentry-boxes.

"What do I want with them, Aaron Beer?" responded the party addressed. "What do our people buy things for but to sell them again—and sell the buyer in the bargain?"

"Right you are, Solomon, in this instance at least," replied the banker, laughing. "This once the buyer is sold. Moses and the Prophets! Firewood might surely be got cheaper than this, Solomon. Sell them again? Who on earth is likely to buy them? Where can you expect to find an amateur of old deal? Ha! ha!"

"Well, then, Aaron, may be I keep them to look at them; they are such a pretty sight. They are His Majesty's—our most gracious King's—own pattern. You leave old Solomon

alone, friend Aaron; he knows what he is about," cried the purchaser of the queer lot, and proceeded to give directions for the removal of his bargain.

Solomon Isaacs might justly boast that he knew what he was about. He was an Israelite indeed, in whom was much guile. A smarter man, in the American sense of the word, was not to be found throughout the domain of the Hohenzollerns.

He had started in life the merest grub in Berlin rag-fair, but he had crept and wound his way ultimately into a fine mansion in the Behrenstrasse and a grand villa at Charlottenburg, with solid investments in the public funds. The grub had expanded into a magnificent specimen of the Stock Exchange stag-beetle.

He had a grand villa at Charlottenburg.

Charlottenburg, you must know, forms a sort of rural suburb to the mighty city and prospective (Strousbergian) seaport of Berlin. It is about a hundred and seventy years old, and owes its origin and rise to Sophie Charlotte, the wife of the first King of Prussia. She built a palace there, which a century after was the favourite abode of good Queen Louise, the mother of the present Emperor of Germany. Queen Louise and King Frederick William lie buried there in the lower vault of the mausoleum erected by the great Schinkel in the park of the palace.

Charlottenburg is emphatically a city of lodging-houses, with a large sprinkling of private villas and a few manufacturing establishments.

When the wealthy Berliner gets disgusted with the dust of his native town, he rushes down to Charlottenburg, to try the country variety of the same article, which, if anything, is a little more dusty still, grayer and more penetrating than the city sort. Maybe, also, that he wishes to stir his sluggish liver into wholesome bilious action, which the extortionate fleecing of the Charlottenburg hotel and lodging-house keeper is eminently calculated to accomplish.

I have occasionally heard Charlottenburg spoken of by enthusiastic Berliners as enchantingly pretty! It may be so —only I am sorry to say that I have never been able to see it. I have tried it repeatedly, and I have invariably found it lamentably wanting in every way. I should not like to be buried there even; though, for the matter of that, I will cheerfully admit that I should not like to be buried anywhere wherever—I have a notion it isn't nice; so I have a strong personal objection to it —on principle.

Frederick William III. not only lies buried there by his own wish, but, in his lifetime, he always preferred dwelling there. There is no accounting for tastes, you see, more especially for royal tastes.

F. W. was a good man in the main, though he made only an indifferent king. It may be difficult for a good man to be a

good king ; it would seem to be a contradiction in terms. Poor dear Robert Brough used to define a king as a "knowing cove." Now whatever sort of a cove Frederick William III. may have been, it is quite certain that he was not a knowing one.

Like all Hohenzollerns, the King was fond of soldiering. With keen discernment of the bent and scope of his intellectual faculties, he devoted himself with special ardour to the clothing and equipping department of the service, in the which he achieved a legitimate success. Napoleon used to call him the King of military tailors. He knew the exact number of buttons properly pertaining to a soldier's tunic, and was always looking most solicitously after the full complement of them. Other sections of the *res militaris* also claimed his intelligent attention ; report stated that he had with his own royal hands designed a new pattern of a sentry-box, which for ugliness and discomfort was held to eclipse anything that had ever before been attempted in that line.

Well ! Let us not be too severe upon him. Did not our own lamented Prince Consort find leisure to devote the vast resources of a rich and original mind to the devising of a marvellous new pattern of a military hat, which stood so nicely balanced on the narrow border between the laughable and the deplorable, that one really found it difficult to elect whether to roar at it or to cry over it ?

Sentry-boxes were indeed altogether special objects of his Majesty's affectionate regard. He loved to gaze upon their black and white bars. He looked upon them as a Royal Monopoly, and the idea that anybody in his dominion beneath the rank of a Regimental Commander in the Army would ever even dream of daring to sport a sentry-box at his door was too preposterous to enter his royal mind.

At the time of the opening of this little narrative the King was having a long spell of residence at Charlottenburg. Every morning at an early hour he took a constitutional ride about the place, attended only by Count Nostitz, his aide-de-camp General-in-waiting. A few days after Solomon Isaac's queer purchase, the King, in the course of his matutinal ride, unexpectedly espied at the door of one of the finest and grandest villas in Charlottenburg two sentry-boxes, looking brand-new in a resplendent coat of fresh white and black paint.

Now two sentry-boxes at the door of a mansion were held to be the infallible outward mark and voucher that a general in active service was residing there. True, there were no sentinels here, but this was of course simply negative evidence that the distinguished new inmate had not yet arrived.

So his Majesty, naturally anxious to know what leader of his dearly cherished army was going to take up his abode there, cried to his aide-de-camp, with his melodious nasal twang :—

"Nostitz, Nostitz ! Will you go and see who is coming to live

at Isaac's?" for the King knew that Solomon Isaacs was the owner and occupier of the villa.

The General rode up to the door, dismounted, and pulled the gilt knob of the bell.

The summons was answered by the master of the mansion in person.

"What General?" asked Nostitz *imperatoriâ brevitate*, as Tacitus hath it, with the peremptory brevity of command.

"What General, your Excellency?" echoed Solomon, with a bland, inquiring smile on his face, and his back bent in all due and proper humility before the great man.

"What General is coming to reside here, I ask you?" said the aide-de-camp, with a portentous frown.

"No General is coming to reside here that I am aware of, gracious Sir Count," replied the Hebrew gentleman, with a well-assumed air of surprise at the inquiry. "This is my private residence, your Excellency. I thank the Lord I am in a position to occupy it without having to underlet."

"What, in three devils' name, then, is the meaning of these sentry-boxes at your door?" somewhat ungraciously inquired the gracious Sir Count, who having been aide-de-camp to old Blucher could hold his own in swearing against any other man in the service.

"Oh, these sentry-boxes? Why, they are mine, your most gracious Excellency."

"*Yours.* Kreuz Sacrament! What do you mean, man?"

"My name is Solomon Isaacs, Excellency. *Herr* Isaacs, if you please," blandly responded that gentleman, by way of polite reminder to the Count to use proper courtesy in addressing him.

"I beg your pardon, Herr Isaacs," cried the Count, taking the hint, "but will you kindly tell me why these sentry-boxes are placed at your door?"

"They are my sentry-boxes, your Excellency. I bought them at the sale. I have had them repaired and painted afresh, so that you would hardly know them again. I take great pride in them, your Excellency."

"Bought them at the sale, Herr Isaacs? At what sale? Who dares sell sentry-boxes in this land?"

"I bought them at the public sale of condemned military stores, gracious Sir Count. They were sold by order of His most gracious Majesty's Army Administration."

"Tut, tut, Herr Isaacs. Surely, they were sold for old wood. You cannot possibly mean to pretend to keep them at your door?"

"I have the official catalogue, your Excellency, signed by the President of the War-Board. They were sold unconditionally for sentry-boxes. It is not likely that Solomon Isaacs would speculate in old wood. Here they stand, gracious Sir Count, and here they will remain."

"Why, you wretched Jew," shouted the Count, losing all command over his temper, "can you actually believe that you will be permitted to have sentry-boxes at your door, as if a General resided in your place? Damn your monstrous insolence!"

"Hard words break no bones, your Excellency. If a high-born and high-placed gentleman can afford to descend to the use of vulgar insult, the wretched Jew can surely afford to hear and to bear the same without letting his temper be ruffled thereby."

"I apologise, Herr Isaacs; my temper got the better of my discretion. Still, I must insist. You cannot possibly think that His Majesty will ever allow this presumptuous pretention."

"May Almighty God long preserve His most gracious Majesty, our beloved King, to reign over us in peace and glory! But your Excellency will graciously permit me to observe that this is my house and my ground, and that these are my sentry-boxes, which I have placed there, on my own property, mind. I know the law of the land will protect a man in doing with his own what he may please, so long as it is not against public morals or the interests of the State. I like sentry-boxes, your Excellency. I love to see them at my door, and to gaze upon them, with their pretty white and black bars. It is a humble fancy of mine, a mere whim, gracious Sir Count. It is my humour, your Excellency, as Shylock says."

"Shylock and you be double-d'd!" shouted Nostitz, in a red-hot passion now. "Himmel heilig Kreuz Donnerwetter! You shall be made to smart for your cursed impertinence, you infernal ——; but, never mind!"

"I do not mind a bit, your Excellency," cried Herr Isaacs, with cheerful composure. "I know your Excellency's hot anger will cool, and the most gracious Sir Count will see and understand that I am in my right."

Nostitz hastily remounted his steed, swearing and "tempesting," and galloped furiously after the King, who had ridden on slowly.

To say that His Majesty was angry would be using a very mild term indeed. He was furious. What! *his* sentry-boxes, his *own* sentry-boxes, of the very pattern conceived in his royal brain, and designed with his royal hands, to stand sentry, as it were, at the door of an unbelieving Jew! No, this vile desecration must not be—it should not be! If the mighty Monarch of Prussia, the third partner in the Holy League that was holding the continent of Europe in thrall, had not the power to put down such flat rebellion—why, it would positively amount to nothing short of cataclysm!

So the King rode fiercely back to the Palace, resolved to have the obnoxious sentry-boxes removed, and their presumptuous owner laid by the heels by a sergeant's guard, to be incontinently detached and despatched for the purpose.

Fortunately, when his Majesty reached the Palace, he found

General Pfuel there, a cool-headed, sensible man of the world and a "bit of a lawyer," who respectfully but firmly protested against the irate Monarch's hasty and ill-considered purpose, judiciously reminding his Majesty of the Sans-Souci Mill and of his illustrious granduncle, and prevailed at last upon the King to consent to take legal advice before deciding to act.

So his Majesty sent for an old crony of his, Privy Councillor Friderici, at that time the soundest Legist in the land, to discuss with him, over a flask of Doppelkümmel, this horrible business in all its bearings, and to devise, if possible, legal means to bring the presumptuous Hebrew to his senses. Now, as the Councillor knew the law, he had an uncomfortable conviction that Herr Solomon Isaacs was in his legal rights. So, when he had come to the bottom of his flask of the famous double-distilled Caraway Liqueur out of His Majesty's own private tippling cellaret, he seemingly found there the only true solution of the knotty point, to wit, that all his Majesty might legally do was to buy the obnoxious sentry-boxes of their present owner. The King commissioned the Councillor to conduct the negotiation.

After a deal of haggling, Solomon consented at last to part with the two boxes for the very respectable sum of One Hundred Thalers, or fifteen pounds sterling—something like six times their value brand-new.

The bargain struck, and the wretched eyesores safely removed to Berlin, His Majesty, albeit a little sore upon the financial point of the transaction, felt greatly relieved, and enjoyed a night's sweet repose.

But judge of the mighty monarch's mingled feelings of consternation and fury, when two more sentry-boxes, neatly repaired and painted, met his royal sight next morning, at the very same place that Friderici's purchase had been made the day before.

The fabled Gorgon's head could hardly have produced a more "stunning" effect upon His Majesty than did these two specimens of transcendent ugliness of his own designing. A curious revulsion took place in the royal mind: he positively began to *hate* sentry-boxes and all men and things connected therewith.

Nostitz was at once despatched to ask the meaning of this impudent open defiance of the ruler of the land; but Nostitz gained nought by his most powerful swearing at Solomon Isaacs and his confounded insolence. The Hebrew gentleman brazenly explained to his Excellency, the most gracious Sir Count, that he had bought eighty of these sentry-boxes, two of which he had sold to Privy Councillor Friderici, so that he had now *only* seventy-eight of them left, which he was fully resolved not to part with below the price paid him the evening before by the most honourable Councillor Friderici for the two *samples* that had first attracted his most gracious Majesty's most gracious attention.

However, as a loyal subject, he would let the king have the lot at four hundred pounds sterling! He swore by the tombs of his ancestors in Syria and Palestine, nay, even by the dread name of the Taousvef Joutof, that he loved these sentry-boxes as dearly as the apple of his eye, since their sight was always reminding him of his beloved king's exalted ingenuity; that to him they were invaluable, therefore, and that it was with a bleeding heart that he consented to part with them for the paltry sum named. He would much rather keep them than take the money for them.

Well, Nostitz swore a goodly number of good round oaths—so, for the matter of that, did the king, who actually condescended in his own august person to bully Solomon Isaacs. It was all of no avail. The crafty Israelite pathetically swore to his royal victim that he had registered a vow in heaven not to part with these cherished sentry-boxes of his under four hundred pounds, and so long as he should continue to possess any two of them, to display them at his door, where they appeared to the best advantage. Surely, surely, the pious king would not have him lay perjury on his immortal soul!

What was to be done? What *could* be done? His Majesty, determined to have done for ever with this sentry-box nuisance, reluctantly drew the strings of his purse, leaving the field and the *spolia opima* to the wily Hebrew. But he incontinently gave strict orders to break up all worn-out old sentry-boxes in the army stores into the smallest bits of firewood.

"Aaron Beer," said Solomon Isaacs, a few days after, to his old friend, "I have sold those sentry-boxes you wot of—I found an amateur you see—I have sold them back to the king. It has turned out a most profitable investment, but I am afraid the market is spoiled now."

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THE SAVOYARD'S RETURN.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

OH! yonder is the well-known spot,
  My dear, my long-lost native home!
Oh! welcome is yon little cot,
  Where I shall rest, no more to roam!
Oh! I have travelled far and wide,
  O'er many a distant foreign land;
Each place, each province I have tried,
  And sung and danced my saraband,
    But all their charms could not prevail
    To steal my heart from yonder vale.

Of distant climes the false report
  Allured me from my native land ;
It bade me rove—my sole support
  My cymbals and my saraband.
The woody dell, the hanging rock,
  The chamois skipping o'er the heights ;
The plain adorn'd with many a flock,
  And, oh ! a thousand more delights
    That grace yon dear beloved retreat
    Have backward won my weary feet.

Now safe return'd, with wandering tired,
  No more my little home I'll leave !
And many a tale of what I've seen
  Shall while away the winter's eve.
Oh ! I have wandered far and wide
  O'er many a distant foreign land ;
Each place, each province, I have tried,
  And sung and danced my saraband ;
    But all their charms could not prevail,
    To steal my heart from yonder vale.

A PLEA FOR THE ORGAN-GRINDER.

REV. R. H. HAWEIS.

WE can imagine the nations passing before us, each represented by its popular form of street music. Germany comes first with its band of singers, followed by a band of men playing on all kinds of musical instruments. France comes fresh from the woods with her cornemuse. Italy issues from the mountains with that tuneful and fascinating goat-skin and pipe, so finely rendered by M. Gounod in *Mirella*. Spain comes with a mandoline; Scotland with the bagpipes; Ireland and Wales with harps of well-known national form and proportion. Even Russia sings a good base tune, and blows a horn well, and England brings up the rear with—a policeman requesting an organ-grinder to move on !

Indeed, that man plays all the favourite tunes. It is true he is not English, but he represents the popular tastes in music. Does he play national melodies? Not many—chiefly the melodies of other countries, or what will pass for them with the million; but he does *grind* certain English ballads too, claptrap sort of jingles—not especially national, or especially anything ; he cannot be said to *play* them; no fancy, or originality, or taste, is displayed, except by the monkey who sits on his shoulder; the performance from first to last is a *grind*. In the streets of other countries you seldom meet with foreign musicians—at least not in France, Germany, and Italy; but who will deny that the

staple of street music in England is organ-grinding? And the grinder is a foreigner, who only grinds a few English tunes under protest. In fact, "He's a pal o' mine" and "Jolly Dogs," are used as gold leaf, to gild pills like "Casta Diva" and the "Carnival de Venise."

But as the organ-grinder is a *great fact*, and perhaps in a survey of street music in England the most prominent fact, he deserves a few moments' calm consideration. There are big organs drawn by a donkey, and little organs drawn by boys; nondescript boxes with a cradle at the top and two babies, drawn by a woman; uprights on a stick with a little handle, turned by a crazy old man; chest open in front and shut at the back, or shut in the front and open at the back. There are flute organs, with a wonderful system of wooden pipes, visible through glass; great magnified accordions, played somehow with a handle—horrid things, which grind only the Old Hundred and a chant on metal pipes. There are tinkling cupboards, which remind one of Dickens' pianoforte with the works taken out, so irregular and uncertain is the effect of the handle upon the tune. There are illustrated organs, with Chinese mandarins performing conjuring tricks in a row, or Nebuchadnezzar's band; and there are organs with a monkey, triangle, bones, tambourine, or whistle obligato. Every man has probably had moments in his life when he has not been sane upon the question of barrel-organs. He has perhaps been placed in difficult circumstances. Let us say he occupies a corner house. On one side at the bottom of the street, commences the "Chickaleary Bloke;" on the other side at the bottom of another street, is faintly heard "Polly Perkins:" both are working steadily up to a point—that point is his corner house—let us say your own corner house. You are in your study writing poetry; nearer and nearer draw the minstrels, regardless of each other, and probably out of each other's hearing, but both heard by you in your favourable position. As they near the point the discord becomes wild and terrible; you rush into the back study, but the *tom-tom* man is in the yard; you rush out of the front door to rush for a policeman—there is none; you use any Italian words you can recollect; at the same time, pointing to your head, you explain that your father lies dangerously ill up-stairs, and that several ladies are dying in the neighbourhood; you implore the Italian to move on, and the scene ends in No. 1 slowly grinding down the street which No. 2 came up, and No. 2 grinding up the street which No. 1 has just come down. At such moments we are apt to speak recklessly on the great subject of barrel-organs, and we sometimes—idle employment—write letters to the newspapers, which are pardonably one-sided. The fact is, the organ question, like all other great questions, has two sides to it, although we seldom hear but one.

Let not those who write abusive letters to the newspapers, and bring in bills to abolish street music, think they will be able to

loosen the firm hold which the barrel-organist has over the British public. Your cook is his friend, your housemaid is his admirer; the policeman and the baker's young man look on him in the light of a formidable rival.

But, for once, let us speak a good word for him. We know all that can be said against him, let us now plead his cause a little. His sphere is large; he conquers more worlds than one; his popularity is not only wide but varied—he enters many clean and spacious squares, and little chubby faces, well-born and rosy, look out from high-railed nursery-windows, and as they look out he looks up, and baby is danced at the bars and stops crying directly, and Tommy forgets his quarrel with Johnny, and runs to the window too, and tears are wiped and harmony is restored in many and many a nursery, and nurse herself finds the penny and smiles, and "organ-man" pockets the money and smiles, and lifts his hat, and waves "ta-ta!" in Italian, and walks off to "fresh fields and pastures new"—and isn't it worth the penny?

And where does he wander to now—that happy, easy-tempered son of the south? Ah, he has no proud looks, and though he has just played to members of the aristocracy, he is willing to turn as merrily for the lowest of the people.

I meet him in the dingy alleys of the great city—I meet him in the regions of garbage and filth, where the atmosphere inhaled seems to be an impartial mixture of smoke and decomposition; and where the diet of the people seems to consist of fried herrings and potato parings: there is our organ-man—and there at least we may bless him—grinding away to the miserable, sunken and degraded denizens of Pigmire Lane or Fish Alley. Let him stay always there—let him grind ever thus. I confess it does my heart good to see those slatternly women come to their doors and stand and listen, and the heavy, frowning, and coal-besmeared men, lean out of the windows with their pipes, and forgetting hunger and grinding poverty, hushing, also, the loud oath and blasphemy for a little season, smile with the pleasure of the sweet sounds. Through that little back window with the cracked panes you can see the lame shoemaker look up for a moment, and as he resumes the long-drawn-out stitches with both hands, it is with countenance relaxed and almost pleasurable energy. The pale-faced tailor looks out from his top storey (yes! like a beam of sunshine the music has struck through him), he forgets the rent, and the work, and the wages, and the wretchedness of life. It is the end of the day, it is lawful to rest for a moment and listen, and they do listen—the men and women clustering in groups on their doorsteps, and leaning from the windows above, and the children—oh! the children! I look down the alley, and suddenly it is flooded with the light of the low sun; it smites the murky atmosphere into purple shades, and broad, warm, yellow light upon the pathway, and glitters like gold leaf upon the window-panes; and the children —the children are dancing all down the alley, dancing in long

vistas far down into the sunny mist, two and two, three and three, but all dancing, and dancing in time; and their faces—many poor pale faces, and some rosy ones too—their faces are so happy, and the whole alley is hushed, save only for the music and the dancing of the children.

I bless that organ-man—a very Orpheus in hell! I bless his music. I stand in that foul street where the blessed sun shines, and where the music is playing; I give the man a penny to prolong the happiness of those poor people, of those hungry, pale, and ragged children, and, as I retire, I am saluted as a public benefactor; and was ever pleasure bought so cheap and so pure?

(*From "Music and Morals," by permission of* MESSRS. W. H. ALLEN & CO.)

ON THE PRINCIPLES OF CHIVALRY.

WILLIAM GODWIN.

ITS principle was built upon a theory of the sexes giving to each a relative importance, and assigning to both functions full of honour and grace. The knights (and every gentleman during that period in due time became a knight) were taught, as the main features of their vocation, the "love of God and the ladies." The ladies, in return, were regarded as the genuine censors of the deeds of knighthood. From these principles arose a thousand lessons of humanity. The ladies regarded it as their glory to assist their champions to arm and to disarm, to perform for them even menial services, to attend them in sickness, and to dress their wounds. They bestowed on them their colours, and sent them forth to the field hallowed with their benedictions. The knights, on the other hand, considered any slight towards the fair sex as an indelible stain to their order; they contemplated the graceful patronesses of their valour with a feeling that partook of religious homage and veneration, and esteemed it as perhaps the first duty of their profession, to relieve the wrongs and avenge the injuries of the less powerful sex.

This simple outline, as to the relative position of the one sex and the other, gave a new face to the whole scheme and arrangements of civil society. It is like those admirable principles in the order of the material universe, or those grand discoveries brought to light from time to time by superior genius, so obvious and simple, that we wonder the most common understanding could have missed them; yet so pregnant with results, that they seem at once to put a new life and inspire a new character into every part of a mighty and all-comprehensive mass.

The passion between the sexes, in its grosser sense, is a momentary impulse merely; and there was danger that, when the fit and violence of the passion was over, the whole would subside into inconstancy and a roving disposition, or, at least, into indifference and almost brutal neglect. But the institutions of chivalry immediately gave a new face to this. Either sex conceived a deep and permanent interest in the other. In the unsettled state of society, which characterised the period when these institutions arose, the defenceless were liable to assaults of multiplied kinds, and the fair perpetually stood in need of a protector and champion. The knights, on the other hand, were taught to derive their fame and their honour from the suffrages of the ladies. Each sex stood in need of the other, and the basis of their union was mutual esteem.

The effect of this was to give a tone of imagination to all their intercourse. A man was no longer merely a man, nor a woman merely a woman. They were taught mutual deference. The woman regarded her protector as something illustrious and admirable; and the man considered the smiles and approbation of beauty as the adequate reward of his toils and his dangers. These modes of thinking introduced a nameless grace into all the commerce of society. It was the poetry of life. Hence originated the delightful narratives and fictions of romance; and human existence was no longer the bare naked train of vulgar incidents, which for so many ages of the world it had been accustomed to be. It was clothed in resplendent hues, and wore all the tints of the rainbow. Equality fled and was no more; and love, almighty, and perdurable Love, came to supply its place.

By means of this state of things, the vulgar impulse of the sexes towards each other, which alone was known to the former ages of the world, was transformed into somewhat of a totally different nature. It became a kind of worship. The fair sex looked upon their protectors, their fathers, their husbands, and the whole train of their chivalry, as something more than human. There was a grace in their motions, a gallantry in their bearing, and a generosity in their spirit of enterprise, that the softness of the female heart found irresistible. Nor less, on the other hand, did the knights regard the sex, to whose service and defence they were sworn, as the objects of their perpetual deference. They approached them with a sort of gallant timidity, listened to their behests with submission, and thought the longest courtship and devotion nobly recompensed by the final acceptance of the fair.

The romance and exaggeration characteristic of these modes of thinking have gradually worn away in modern times; but much of what was most valuable in them has remained. Love has in later ages never been divested of the tenderness and consideration which were thus rendered some of its most estimable features. A certain desire in each party to exalt the

other, and regard it as worthy of admiration, became inextricably interwoven with the simple passion. A sense of the honour that was borne by the one to the other, had the happiest effect in qualifying the familiarity and unreserve in the communion of feelings and sentiments, without which the attachment of the sexes cannot subsist. It is something like what the mystic divines describe of the beatific visions, where entire wonder and adoration are not judged to be incompatible with the most ardent affection, and all meaner and selfish regards are annihilated.

CONSOLATION.

BE of good heart, though gloom prevails
And heavy clouds oppress,
Although to mortal eyes obscured
The sun shines none the less.

The seasons' revolutions shew
From summer's sun to frost,
That light may dim, that warmth may cease .
Though absent, never lost.

The earth will shortly grant its store,
Birds carol on the tree,
The sombre scene will disappear,
The heart feel glad and free.

And so in life, 'midst joy and pain
In fitful changes past,
The task fulfilled, the end matured,
The harvest reaped at last,

We bid adieu to cank'ring cares,
To aching hearts distressed,
To find a land where storms are hushed,
To grant the pilgrim rest.

(*By permission of the Author.*)

WIDE AWAKE.

W. S. GILBERT.

I AM a remarkably good-looking middle-aged bachelor. Twenty years ago I sunk all my property in an annuity, and on that annuity I live very comfortably.

Ten years ago it occurred to me that I might very likely marry, so I insured my life for ten thousand pounds.

I am a man of a particularly affectionate disposition. This amiable tendency has led me into many difficulties in my time

—not the least of which was an engagement to marry my cousin, Georgina Sparrow.

I supposed I loved Georgina when I proposed to her. Looking calmly back at Georgina, it seems improbable, I admit—but still I *did* propose to her, and as I had no underhand motive in doing so (for I am rich and extremely handsome, whereas she is poor and singularly plain), I suppose I must have loved her, more or less.

However that may be, there is no doubt at all that before I had been engaged to her for a week, I found myself wondering what on earth I had ever seen in her to admire. She was bony, angular, acid, and forty.

My uncle, old Sparrow (Georgina's father), and my aunt Julia, his wife, and Georgina's two horsey brothers, James and John, took the greatest interest in our engagement. They seemed to think it likely that I should try to get out of it, and they determined that I should not have a chance of doing so. I should have stated that I lodged at their house. I should have liked to have lodged somewhere else, where I could have had more liberty and less fluff, but my natural amiability was more than a match for my sense of convenience, and I remained.

On one occasion I *did* hint at the possibility of my removing to a less dear and less dirty sphere of action, but the indignation of Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow, the violent attitudes of John and James, and the appalling hysterics of Georgina, induced me weakly to confess that it was only my fun.

My natural amiability is such that I *must* love some one—and as it was out of the question to go on loving Georgina, it became necessary to love somebody else. I found an appropriate object of homage in Bridget Comfit, a very plump and rosy widow lady of small independent property, who lived in Great Coram Street.

To make a long story short, I will at once confess that, being engaged to Georgina Sparrow, I nevertheless secretly made love to Mrs. Comfit. I even went so far as to make arrangement to marry Mrs. Comfit, at St. Pancras Church, Euston Square. I did not tell Bridget about Georgina, because I knew that it would distress her, and I did not tell Georgina about Bridget, because I knew that it would distress *her*. It would also have distressed her furious father, her fluent mother, and her two very violent and impulsive brothers, John and James. I acted for the best.

The day before the day appointed for my marriage with Mrs. Comfit arrived. I did not feel quite happy that evening. I did not enjoy my dinner. Uncle Sparrow seemed to have a reproachful something in his eye which I could not account for. Aunt Sparrow was surprisingly silent. The two brothers, John and James, looked moody, and Georgina was uncomfortably affectionate. I felt rather conscience-smitten.

I began to think that in marrying Bridget secretly, I was

perhaps acting an underhand part towards Georgina. I had never looked at it in that light before; it had always seemed to me to be the most natural thing in the world, that a man who had engaged himself to Georgina should take the earliest opportunity of getting out of his engagement.

But there is a right and a wrong way of doing everything, and I saw, when it was too late, that it would have been better to have broken her heart in a more manly and straightforward way. Still I acted for the best.

The next morning—the morning of my marriage-day—I breakfasted in bed. I couldn't face the family. I am a tender-hearted old fool, and I could not feel at my ease in the presence of the woman whose heart I was deliberately breaking. So I pleaded a bad bilious headache, and remained in bed until Uncle Sparrow had started for the City (he was something—not much—in the City), and his two headstrong sons had betaken themselves to Aldridge's.

I knew that this would happen at a quarter to ten, and that at ten o'clock Mrs. Sparrow and Georgina would go down to the kitchen to have their daily row over the cook's accounts—so at ten I determined to make my escape.

I dressed—reached the ground-floor in safety—kissed a last farewell to Georgina's very long goloshes in the umbrella-stand, and eventually stood, free and undetected, in the street. I had yet an hour to spare before Bridget would arrive at the church—and I spent this in walking round Euston Square—which can be done in two thousand one hundred paces—and at a quarter to eleven I entered the church. There was no one there but the beadle.

I went up to him and said, "Oh, I beg your pardon, but I've come to be married." At that moment I was clapped on the back by Georgina's two headstrong brothers. My cousins and their father had been paying a visit to a money-lender in Euston Square. They saw me walking round, their curiosity was excited, and they followed me to the church. And so came about one of the most tremendously dramatic situations in Modern History.

"So, sir," said Uncle Sparrow, "you've come to be married?"

"Fire and fury!" said John.

"Zounds and the devil!" said James.

I was equal to the emergency. My natural kindness of heart prevented my admitting the truth to my uncle and my cousins, for I never distress a fellow-creature intentionally (unless she is ugly, and I am engaged to her), so I resorted to one of the most ingenious methods of getting out of a dilemma that I ever heard of. I gave a sudden start, gasped, rolled my eyes wildly, and exclaimed,—

"Where am I?"

They explained to me, in language quite unsuited to the

sacred edifice in which they were standing, that I was in St. Pancras Church.

"How did I come here! I don't remember anything about it! The last thing I can remember is being in bed with a bilious headache, and trying to go to sleep! And here I am, dressed and wide-awake, in St. Pancras Church! What is the inference?"

They admitted, in disgracefully strong language, that they were at a loss to draw any satisfactory inference from this statement.

"My dear uncle—my good (but violent) cousins," said I, "this is very distressing to me, for I thought I had quite shaken it off. I haven't done such a thing as walk in my sleep for years!"

They replied sardonically, that they felt sure of it.

"I once remained for nearly a week in a state of somnambulism. It was most providential that you happened to be here!"

They quite agreed with me.

"Another time," said I, "don't wake me suddenly. It is very dangerous to wake a somnambulist with a violent shock. Better let me have my sleep out." This I said to keep up the illusion.

They promised that, now that they were aware of my infirmity, they would not wake me too suddenly on the next occasion.

"The best thing I can do," said I, "is to go home and go to bed again."

They heartily concurred with this suggestion. John took one of my arms, James took the other, and Uncle Sparrow walked behind us, keeping the ferule of his walking-stick in the small of my back.

There was nothing for it but to give up all hope of being married that day. I was sorry for Bridget; but I felt that an explanation made at the earliest opportunity, would set that right. After all, it would only delay our happiness for a few days. I could not help chuckling over my presence of mind, and the ready wit I had shown in escaping from a difficulty which would have overwhelmed ninety-nine men out of a hundred. It is true that I was rather surprised to find how readily my explanation was accepted by my uncle and my cousins; but that only showed how skilfully I had played my part.

I remained in bed all that day, for I really did not feel equal to facing the family in my disappointed frame of mind. But one can't remain in bed for ever, and the next morning I put a bold face on it, and came down, as usual, to breakfast.

"Good morning, uncle," said I, in my most cheerful tones. "How are you, dear aunt? Ha, John! Ha, James! Georgina, my love, good morning."

They looked at one another significantly, but made no response to my greeting.

"Lovely morning!" said I.

"It's just as I thought," said Uncle Sparrow to Aunt Julia. "He's at it again."

"Hush," said Aunt Julia, "don't speak so loud. You'll wake him."

"Poor boy!" said Georgina, in a half-whisper. "His eyes are wide open, though he's evidently fast asleep."

"That is always the case with somnambulists," said Uncle Sparrow. "The sleeping brain receives its impressions through the medium of the eyes, nose, and ears."

"His nose and ears are wide open also," said John.

"So they were yesterday," said James.

"A very curious instance of somnambulism came under my notice in Italy a few years ago," said Uncle Sparrow. "A very respectable young girl was found under suspicious circumstances in the chamber of an Italian noble, and the most unfavourable inferences were drawn as to her moral character in consequence. Her forthcoming marriage with a handsome young peasant was broken off, and all her old companions repudiated her. Eventually she was seen crossing a most dangerous plank over a water-mill, in her petticoat body, and it became clear to all that the poor girl was a confirmed somnambulist. She was at once re-instated in the good opinion of her friends, and her marriage with the young peasant was celebrated with unusual rejoicings. I knew the family very well."

I looked from one to another in blank astonishment.

"Am I to suppose," said I, "that you are under the impression that I am asleep?"

"Except that his utterance is thick," said Georgina, "there is very little difference between his sleeping and waking voice."

I began to get annoyed.

"Is this a joke?" I enquired, as I sat down to breakfast.

"Take his knife away, Georgina," said Aunt Julia; "cut up his bacon, and let him eat it with a teaspoon."

You can't eat fried bacon with a teaspoon so as to enjoy it. I therefore protested against this interference with my convenience.

"I insist," said Uncle Sparrow, "on his knife being removed. John and James, sit one on each side of him and watch his movements very carefully. But be very careful not to wake him, as that would be most dangerous. These trances usually last a week. John, feed him with a spoon. James, hold his tea-cup and give him a sip occasionally."

"Uncle," said I, "I beg—I *beg* that you will allow me to have my breakfast in peace. I had nothing to eat yesterday (having had a bilious headache), and I am literally starving."

"Now give him a bite of muffin," said Uncle Sparrow. "Now a spoonful of egg."

"Indeed--indeed, I am quite awake. I can feed myself. I want no assistance from anyone."

"Now a mouthful of tea—take care—it's running down his waistcoat."

There was nothing for it but to submit to be fed by the hulking brothers.

I made several appeals to their intelligence, to their sense of humour, and to their feelings as human beings, but in vain. The only notice they took of my remarks was to direct each others' attention to the fact that I expressed myself quite coherently.

The farce was carried on through the whole day, and the next, and the next after that. Nothing would convince them that I was awake. I did all I could to persuade them to treat me like a rational being, but in vain. The two detestable brothers devoted themselves to taking care of me with extraordinary assiduity. They never left me. They took me out for a walk every day, fed me carefully at meal times, undressed me and put me to bed at night, and dressed me again the next morning.

My unfortunate condition was explained to all visitors, who took a deep interest in watching my movements, and every one was enjoined to speak with bated breath for fear of waking me. No attention was paid by any one to my remarks; but every one made observations of the most unpleasantly personal description about me. And, curiously enough, no one entered the house who did not notice something unusual in my appearance and demeanour, which was only reconcileable with the theory that I was walking and talking in my sleep.

Uncle Sparrow opened all my letters (including a very emphatic one from the disappointed Mrs. Comfit), and kindly volunteered to take care of them until I was in a condition to attend to them myself.

I am a man of easy temper, but there are limits to my powers of endurance. It was quite evident to me that they were simply "paying me out" for the deception I had practised on them at the church. It was perhaps right that I should suffer some little mortification, but I felt that matters had now been carried far enough. I spoke out with furious indignation, and told them that unless they at once gave me an assurance, in writing, and signed by the whole family, that I was wide awake, I would appeal for protection to the laws of my country. I did not feel quite sure under which Act of Parliament my grievance would come, but I knew that a remedy was provided for every wrong, and that to insist upon it that a man is asleep when he is really wide awake is a wrong of a most distinct and aggravating description. But my threats had no effect on my relations; nor was I more successful with one eminent psychologist who came three times a day, for an hour and a half each time, to study my case, for a work on dreams upon which he was then engaged.

As I sat fuming with impatience in an arm-chair in Uncle

Sparrow's study, surrounded by the whole family, a letter (addressed to me) was placed in Uncle Sparrow's hand. In spite of my emphatic protest, he took the liberty of opening and reading it.

It was from the office in which I had insured my life, for the benefit of my widow (whoever that might be) for £10,000. It informed me that the annual premium on my policy was still unpaid, that the fourteen days of grace had expired, and that unless the secretary received a cheque for the amount (£320) in the course of the afternoon, the policy would, *ipso facto*, become null and void.

"You had better attend to this at once," said he, handing the letter to me. "*At once*," he added, with marked emphasis. "I am surprised that you should have neglected so important, so vital a matter."

I saw my advantage at a glance.

"I will attend to it, Uncle, to-morrow, if I am in a condition to do so. These trances, however, usually last a week."

"But to-morrow won't do. The secretary says, expressly, that the money must be paid this afternoon."

"My dear," said Georgina, "pray do not risk a delay. The matter is of the highest moment. Please be good enough to write a cheque at once."

"I will write a cheque for the amount," said I, "as soon as I am awake. But these trances usually last a week."

"Come, come," said Uncle Sparrow, "the joke has been carried far enough. We were only chaffing you. You never were wider awake in your life. Come—write the cheque at once."

"Uncle Sparrow," said I, "Aunt Julia, Georgina, John, and James—you have done your best to persuade me that I have been in a somnambulistic trance for three days. At first I doubted it, but it became impossible to reject the evidence of so many disinterested witnesses, and I am quite convinced that you were right and I was wrong. I am, no doubt, fast asleep. I admit it cheerfully, and I am very much obliged to you for the great care and attention you have bestowed on me in this unfortunate and abnormal condition. It is not likely to last above three or four days longer, and as soon as I am thoroughly awake and capable of attending to business, I will certainly send a cheque for my premium. But not till then."

"I tell you, sir," replied Uncle Sparrow, "that the whole thing was a joke. I freely admit it. But it is time that this fooling came to an end—write the cheque, like a good fellow, or Georgina will be left penniless."

"My own, my love," said Georgina, "don't be ridiculous. You are much older than I"—that wasn't true—"and in the natural course of events I shall survive you. If this cheque is not written at once, I shall be a penniless widow!"

"I will write it," said I, "when I awake."

"Papa—Mamma—John—James," exclaimed Georgina, in a frenzy, "explain to him that he is labouring under a delusion! Oh, somebody, pray do something, or I shall be ruined!"

I was firm; I insisted upon it that a cheque written in a state of somnambulism would be invalid, and that it would be a useless waste of a stamp if I were to write one in my then condition. The whole family went on their knees to me, but in vain. I stuck to my colours.

The hours crept on—it was three o'clock, and the office closed at four. The family foamed at the mouth. Eventually, finding that nothing could shake my resolution, Uncle Sparrow rushed out to his bankers with the family plate, Aunt Julia's jewels, and a bundle of American stock, borrowed the three hundred and twenty pounds on that security, and paid my premium five minutes before the office closed.

* * * * * * *

The next day I came down to breakfast, wide awake. I felt that I was awake, and, besides that, the whole family cheerfully admitted it. Uncle Sparrow begged me to favour him at once with a cheque for the amount of my premium. At first I did not understand what he meant, but a few words of explanation made his meaning clear. I expressed my natural surprise that he should take upon himself to pay the premium on a policy which I had no intention of keeping up, and I declined altogether to hold myself responsible for his act. An angry scene ensued, which resulted in a final rupture of my engagement with Georgina.

To-morrow I marry Mrs. Comfit.

(*By permission of the Author.*)

CONCERNING THE MODESTY OF MODERN AUTHORS.

"F.A.L."*

THE modesty of an author is most generally exemplified in his Preface, Introduction, or Postscript.

I am not one of those who consider prefaces a bore; it is really only lazy readers who never read prefaces. One likes to have a little acquaintance with the author himself before commencing his work. An author should, however, intrude himself as little as possible *into* his work. It is to be observed that those authors who dispense with a preface or any lieu of a preface—viz., an introduction, postscript, or *l'envoi*, are in the habit of constantly bouncing in upon the reader, with a startling and somewhat electrical suddenness, in the shape of detached paragraphs at the commencement or the end of sundry chap-

* These initials will be recognised by many as those of a musical and dramatic critic of note.

ters in the work. All this may be avoided by a good preface, brief and to the point; but modern authors destroy the beauty of their introductory remarks by the sickening modesty and self-abasement which they plentifully make use of in a series of stock phrases kept ready turned to hand.

It always seems to me, when I read these apologetic paragraphs, that the author is standing before me in a white apron and well-greased locks, like a smirking barber who is recommending some new concoction, especially prepared by him, for the benefit of the human head. As a rule, it appears to me that the style of writing in a preface, compared with that used in the capital work, is completely different. However, this may only be the material difference between the real and the imaginative. I have certainly remarked that a complacent, deprecating, half-timid, half-feeble kind of preface generally leads to an alarming display of energy in the capital work; and the author who is the most humble and apologetic in his preface is the most virulent and defiant in the book proper; while a very feeble performance is occasionally ushered in with a tremendous flourish of remarkably brazen trumpets. Again, a man who is strangely mournful, not to say dyspeptic, in his treatment of his subject, affects a ghastly humour in the preface; and a man who, perhaps, has set you laughing extravagantly with the humour of his subject and the brilliance of his wit, you remember to have been strangely despondent in the preface, as if he were afraid of his own jokes. Is this a mere trick for the effect of contrast?

I cannot say. But it seems to me that the difficulty arises as to which portion of the book may be supposed to represent the author in earnest. Is the modesty expressed in the preface adhered to throughout the performance? May we not suppose, that if the author be really so incapable and impotent as he would have us believe, it would have been better had he never attempted his task? The truth is, these modest prefaces are flagrant egoisms; they are too apologetic to be sincere; they are too artificial, and too obviously written for effect, to be either natural or ingenuous. If these authors write their life-sketches and romances of real life with the same aim at effect that is so obvious in the preface, may we not fairly take it for granted that the extravagance of the prefatory remarks has been extended to the main body of the work?

The modesty of modern authors is likewise displayed in their voluminousness. They not only spin out their tales and treatises to an inordinate length, but they publish again and again at an alarming rate.

This fact is apt to suggest to a slow-going mind the thought that they must *write* more than they *study*.

To write genuine tales of life requires experience. When an author regularly turns out two three-volume novels a year, it is obvious that *lies* supply the place of facts, and where the

material should be collected and invented, *i.e.*—combined, it is borrowed.

Another phase of the modesty of authors is their great aptitude for deliberately committing an error and then apologising for it in an artful manner, evidently calculated to disarm the indignant reader; some even going so far as to address their readers by kind and affectionate epithets, such as "intelligent," "gentle," "kind," "indulgent," "fair," "tender-hearted," "dear," etc.

There is no excuse for an author who deliberately spins out his subject to fill six or seven hundred pages octavo of close print, when he might have clearly accomplished his task in three hundred, however graceful or insinuating his apology may be.

It is amusing to observe how, if an author should happen to be obliged to make a personal appearance before the public, his demeanour is characterised by an extremely real modesty, or rather, extravagant bashfulness, which is quite painful to witness. The maiden dramatic author who receives his first "call" from an enthusiastic audience, is immediately seized with disagreeable pains somewhere in the digestive regions, and a choking sensation in his throat, which symptoms of "stage fright" require to be dispelled, or subdued by sundry pattings on the back from the prompter, and ejaculatory encouragements from the stage-manager, in the middle of which the gasman suddenly seizes the roller of the act-drop and pulls it aside that the timid author may pass "on." This movement causes a shiver to pass through the ponderous curtain: the audience redouble their applause at the signal. There is no hope now for the poor "modest author," he must "go on."

He tremblingly steps on to the proscenium; attempts a calm smile of satisfaction, which, unfortunately, looks from the front like an idiotic grin; blushes scarlet to the roots of his hair, bows awkwardly, and vanishes. As soon as the ordeal is passed, he feels as bold as brass, and after a "liquor up," he thinks "There was nothing to be frightened at, after all."

If he produce a second successful piece, he trips across the stage with an expressive smirk, which says as plainly as words, "You dare not damn me now."

Thoughts are bolder than words or actions: a man will write what he will not speak.

The author who only presents himself through his well-turned sentences is apt to assume a false modesty, which is worse than bare-faced impudence, and to thrust himself before his audience under cover of unnecessary excuses and apologies which are quite uncalled for.

The dramatic author does not appear personally before the footlights until he receives a *bonâ fide* "call."

It seems to me that it would be more in keeping with true modesty, if all authors would refrain from *thrusting themselves* in any form before the public, until the public think proper to require their appearance.

(*By permission of the Author*).

GUILD'S SIGNAL.

BRET HARTE.

[William Guild was engineer of the train which, on the 19th of April, plunged into Meadow Brook, on the line of the Stonington and Providence Railroad. It was his custom, as often as he passed home, to whistle an "All's well!" to his wife. He was found, after the disaster, dead, with his hand on the throttle-valve of his engine.]

Two low whistles, quaint and clear,
That was the signal the engineer—
  That was the signal that Guild, 'tis said—
Gave to his wife at Providence,
As through the sleeping town, and thence
    Out in the night,
    On to the light,
  Down past the farms, lying white, he sped!

As a husband's greeting, scant, no doubt,
Yet to the woman looking out,
  Watching, and waiting, no serenade,
Love-song, or midnight roundelay
Said what that whistle seemed to say:
    "To my trust true,
    "So love to you!
  "Working or waiting, good night!" it said.

Brisk young bagmen, tourists fine,
Old commuters along the line,
  Brakemen and porters glanced ahead,
Smiled as the signal, sharp, intense,
Pierced through the shadows of Providence,—
    "Nothing amiss—
    "Nothing!—it is
  "Only Guild calling his wife," they said.

Summer and Winter, the old refrain
Rang o'er the billows of ripening grain,
  Pierced through the budding boughs o'erhead,
Flew down the track when the red leaves burned
Like living coals from the engine spurned;
    Sang as it flew:
    "To our trust true,
  "First of all, duty! Good night!" it said.

And then, one night, it was heard no more
From Stonington over Rhode Island shore,
  And the folk in Providence smiled and said,
As they turned in their beds, "The engineer
"Has once forgotten his midnight cheer."
    One only knew
    To his trust true,
  Guild lay under his engine, dead!

PUNCH.

Albert Smith.

Amidst the various inducements to loiter on your way which the streets of London continually present, there is one object that always possesses for us an irresistible attraction, far above all others; and that is the peripatetic theatre of our adored friend Punch. No matter how pressing our business—no matter how late for our appointment we may be, or distant from the spot to which we are progressing, the instant we hear Punch's shrill expressive squeak, and behold the light framework of the scene of his gambols assuming a fixed perpendicular position, we bid a temporary adieu to aught else of consequence, and, taking our place amongst the crowd of small boys, servant-maids, printers' devils, errand-carriers, and other street frequenters that surround his temple, we are for the time lost to everything but the tricks and drolleries, the sly manœuvres and deep-laid schemes, of our merry, bold, cowardly, deceitful, candid puppet.

We are never ashamed of being caught gazing at Punch. Many of our friends—nice young gentlemen of the glazed boot and lemon-kid glove school—have severely reprobated us for yielding to the inducements which the wooden hero holds out to arrest our steps; but these chidings have invariably gone in at one ear and out at the other—a curious overland journey across the brain, which no philosopher has yet properly defined, although we hear of it hourly in society. We are not angry with our friends, for everybody has his own ideas of refinement and gentility; but we pity them. We regret that they allow themselves to be deprived of much amusement and real laughter, for a mistaken notion of the *comme il fait*. And if they are seen, what does it matter? There are puppets in society, whose tricks are similar to, and twice as mischievous as, the pranks of Punch, whom it is thought no disgrace to gaze at. But this is one of the results of our English "fear-of-what-other-people-think!" In the Champs Elysées, the small rough benches which the poor exhibitor of Punch places in front of his show are thronged with grown-up and respectable people, who scream with uncontrolled delight at his vagaries. The French enjoy themselves because they do not quail, as we do, beneath the opinions of their neighbours; and the same feeling which allows them to ride in roundabouts and revolving ships, permits them equally to enter, heart and soul, into the performances of Punch, without caring whether anybody they know is regarding them or otherwise.

We cannot, however, disguise the melancholy fact, that Punch is on the decline. It is true that he escaped the notice of the Metropolitan Police Act, and, whilst the dogs were emancipated from the trucks, he was permitted to bully and tease the

hapless Toby to his heart's content ; still, we fear his glories are departing. Commend us to the goodly times when Mr. Powell, the prince of "motion makers," set forth his exhibition "under the little Piazza in Covent Garden," and the Opera at the Haymarket was seriously injured by the *concurrence;* when the sparrows and chaffinches at the latter theatre, instead of perching on the trees, only put out the candles, and the ballet yielded in attraction to the pig that danced a minuet with Punch. The clever paper of Steele, that made Pope shake his sides as he read it, related to no commonplace performance. But, alas! the times are sadly changed. The Opera has resumed its sway, and a *pas de deux* between Pierrot and Cerito is now thought superior to the celebrated opening dance between Punch and his consort.

Punch loves to be in the world, although he affects retirement from a great thoroughfare. He rather inclines to a quiet street that debouches into a stream of population. Hence the *culs-de-sac* in the Strand that lead towards the river are sometimes favoured by him ; for he is not annoyed there by passing vehicles, whilst he can attract a good audience from the foot-passengers. We have occasionally seen him at the bottom of Berners Street ; more frequently in the offshoots of Tottenham Court Road ; and very often in Castle Street, Leicester Square, his most favoured locality, where he collects a delighted crowd from the multitudes who are perpetually threading that extraordinary series of courts and archways, combs, straw-bonnets, cold ham, false teeth, and portmanteaus, that leads from New Street towards the West End. Here he revels in uncontrolled wickedness ; here his scream is more joyously shrill than in any other situation ; and here his performance is generally of a more prolonged nature, from the change of audience, than his spectators are usually favoured with. And yet we never saw the end of it—we do not believe any one ever did, for his antics are too often cut short by the paucity of the last collection of coppers which has been solicited in the inverted cymbal.

Our ideas of Punch are of a mysterious and inexplicable kind. We cannot quite divest ourselves of the opinion that he is not altogether an inorganic body—a mere compound of wood, calico, and dirty paint. We confess it without shame, we should not sleep tranquilly in our bed if Punch were lying on the toilet-table. We should feel more at our ease if we locked him up in a drawer previous to retiring to rest, because then we should know there was not a chance of his amusing himself during the night by beating the back of our head with his all-powerful cudgel. Even in his own abode, although we are distinctly aware that there is a man in a fustian jacket and corduroy trousers, with lace-up boots, directing his actions, we still concentrate all our ideas of vitality there enclosed in our frolicsome hero. The other persons of the drama are mere puppets, subservient to the proper performance of the comedy ;

but Punch is an exception to them. We can imagine him, when the show is over, carrying his pugnacious disposition into the oblong box that encloses him and his companions, and thrashing them with the same merciless vigour when shut up in the aforesaid case, as he did when he figured in public.

Whenever we see a Punch's show, we look upon the chief actor as the same being we have witnessed before, and invest him with the same propensities and internal economy. We cannot reconcile ourselves to the reality, that there are more Punches than one in the world, and nothing would distress our intellectual faculties more than to see two Punches in one show. A sight like this would bewilder us; our mind would not be able to grapple with the confusion thus created. We would rather not witness so strange a sight, but incline to the theory that Punch is ubiquitous; that the same Punch who figures at the Fête of St. Cloud is the next moment, perhaps even at that very time, thrashing the constable to the delight of a London mob, or amusing the pleasure-seekers on the smooth turf of Egham race-course.

Punch is the only one of the street performers who does not care a bit for the policemen.

We were watching his drama one day, in company with a friend, when a raw recruit of the police force requested the wooden hero to "move on." But Punch, nothing daunted, immediately began to argue the case with his enemy, in which he succeeded so admirably, that the policeman was glad to slink off, amidst the laughter and jeers of the audience. He could not have been more completely beaten had he been Jack Ketch, Shallabala, the constable, or any other of the puppets.

Punch enjoys an excellent constitution. Blows that would be sudden death to other people, fall lightly and unheeded upon his occiput. He merely exclaims, "How hard the wind blows!" and cures himself in five seconds by rubbing the back of his head against the wings of his theatre—a species of counter-irritation to which many quacks have doubtless been indebted for their ideas. One of his finest delineations, however, is the manner in which, after receiving a thrashing from the unknown intruder, he looks carefully round his theatre, to see from what quarter the injuries have proceeded, and concludes his search by leaning half over the front, and endeavouring to peer round the sides of the show. This is perfect, and only approached by his occasional convulsive shudders after the ghost has appeared to him, one of the most terrible impersonifications of super-natural fright ever exhibited. Nor does the Belgian Lion at Waterloo repose in calmer triumph over the mound of slaughtered heroes which it surmounts, than Punch does, when he tranquilly perches himself upon the line of victims to his conquering arm, whose lifeless forms embellish the front board of his theatre.

The drama of Punch has suffered material change within the last few years. The baby, Jack Ketch, the gallows, and the ——

(we hesitate to write his name in) the—enemy of mankind, have almost disappeared. Their places have been supplied by a clown, and divers other characters. We have also witnessed a tin caddy, through which Jim Crow pokes his head, when Punch's curiosity leads him to peep into the interior; and a spectre made of wood, with an enormous mouth of red cloth. We do not like these innovations. They look like a taste for spectacle, and, where this prevails, the legitimate drama must fall. Punch is to the Fantoccini what Shakespeare is to the ballets of Her Majesty's Theatre; and we should not wish either to merge into the other. Some mercenary proprietors have desecrated Punch's show by turning it to account with an evening exhibition of Chinese shadows, illuminated by various candle-ends placed behind. This was unpardonable; and we were exceedingly rejoiced to see the transparent screen destroyed by accidental conflagration a few evenings since, in Bloomsbury Square. It was a just visitation.

In conclusion, we have a question to ask, connected with our immortal friend; and, if any of our readers can solve it, we shall be more than happy to receive their communications. How is Punch's unearthly voice produced? Is it a natural sound, or the result of some peculiar instrument in the mouth? We were taught in infancy, that two quadrangular pieces of tin, bound together by narrow tape, would produce the desired effect when placed between the lips. This is not the fact. A squeaking sound may be perpetrated through their use, but no articulation of words is practicable; and we opine that the noise is the result of much training, or natural conformation of the muscles of the organs of voice. One use these tin instruments certainly possess. A lady of our acquaintance bitterly offended us. We could not openly retaliate, so we cloaked our anger under the mask of kindness. We made four of the above whistles, and gave them to the same number of her children. Our vengeance was complete; the house was the scene of one shrill, continuous squeak, from morning till night, as shrill as Punch's, without the advantage of his sage remarks.

(*By permission of* MESSRS. R. BENTLEY & SON).

A STROLL WITH BRIGHAM YOUNG.

HOWARD PAUL.

SALT Lake City on a May morning is one of the prettiest places on the American continent. Of an English May I have not a very exalted opinion, witness the May recently passed, with its persistent showeriness and muggy irregularity; May, out in the far West, like her sister June, is sedate and reliable, and indulges in no such humid vagaries as she commits on this side of the broad Atlantic.

The City of the Great Salt Lake is built on a slope formed by a bend in a range of the Wasatch mountains. These mountains are tipped with snow ; the green valley below sparkles like an emerald in the bright sun ; the houses dotted hither and thither are quaint and fresh looking ; swift narrow streams of sweet clear water brought down from the Cañons, dash along the sides of the streets, which not only irrigate the little gardens and orchards with which the city abounds, but are prettily ornate and unique in aspect. In the matter of blossoms I am perfectly sure that Nice or distant Ispahan and the far-away Persian provinces could not exceed the riotous luxuriance of the Mormon metropolis. The air is loaded with the scents of flowers. The clover, thrusting its bonnie pink shoulders through the brown soil, spreads out as far as the eye can reach, and the buttercups burn in the grass, giving colour, variety, and animation to the landscape. The season is as advanced in May as it would be in England in the mid June. The tulips in the gardens lift their goblets of gems to the sun, and peas and strawberries are to be had for the asking. The second-class poets and other sentimental idiots who have puffed our British May into an undeserved notoriety would be justified in their rhapsodical flights on the Pacific coast.

I spent a few weeks in Salt Lake City a year before the late Brigham Young died, and saw a deal of the old Seer and Revelator. He visited the theatre quite four nights a week, sometimes with one wife, sometimes with two, three, or more ; and on one occasion, when the Lady of Lyons (a pet play of his, by the way) was represented, he escorted no less than six wives and twenty-two children. They all trooped in two-by-two, after the manner of English school-girls, as one sees them promenading at Richmond and Brighton—and burly old Brigham brought up the rear, swinging a huge cane with a knob on it as big as an orange. During the *entr'actes* he would leave his box, or rather boxes, for he had a series with communicating doors, and pay a visit to my dressing-room. On parting he would say—

"When you come to see me, drop in early. This beautiful weather finds me up at six o'clock."

I took him at his word, and called on him one morning at seven. I fancy he was pleased. I know he was surprised, for he instantly remarked that I was the first "professional" (he had this phrase pat) visiting Salt Lake City that ever looked him up so early. After a cup of Japanese tea, made very weak and drank without milk which destroys the bouquet of Oolong, the venerable pluralist suggested a walk through the city. I was delighted.

He said, "We've got some queer business signs in this city. I do not know whether you've observed them yet, but our people come to the point, and I encourage the idea. Come along !" We strolled past the Temple and the Tabernacle, entering the Main Street.

"How's that?" he enquired, pointing to a gigantic placard on the side of a clothing establishment. It read :—

GREAT SLAUGHTER OF OVERCOATS.

"You see in the spring our friend naturally desires to get rid of his surplus stock. See, there's another!"

We stopped before the door of a trunkmaker, and in the window appeared :—

PURCHASERS OF TRASH—PLEASE PASS ON!

Further on an eating-house announced :—

A GOOD SQUARE MEAL,
25 CENTS.

and within a few doors a red flag fluttered from a beer-house, displaying the words—

BOSS LAGER,
5 CENTS A GLASS.

In front of a fruit store the proprietor mounted a placard on a barrel—

SWEET SIXTEEN—ORANGES FOR 50 CENTS.

And an enterprising shoemaker made a great feature of—

PATENT SQUEAKLESS BOOTS,
ONLY $2.50. TO PAY LESS IS NOT ECONOMY.

"Those are all good, eh?" asked the prophet. "You see in these pushing times it's the longest pole that knocks the fruit, and a sign should stand out like a sore thumb."

"Right, Mr. President, right," I coincided. "We think we know a deal about advertising in London, but you are a long way ahead of us. The fact is your people do not fear going out of the beaten track. In England we are the slaves of tradition. 'As it was in the beginning,' &c. If a London tradesman were to exhibit signs such as you point out, his shop would be avoided by respectable people. It would not be thought 'good form' to patronize an eccentric tradesman. Eccentricity is permitted to poets and artists, but to tradesmen—never."

"Is that so?" he remarked interrogatively; now I'll show you in a few moments an advertisement that goes beyond any you have yet seen—though I can't say I approve of it. It's running the thing too far into the ground."

It was not long before we approached a suburb of the town, where rose the white tombs of a mighty cemetery.

"You've heard of Plantation Bitters?"

"Yes," I said. "It's a quack medicine. I saw it advertised all the way from New York to San Francisco—in the most out-

of-the-way places—on rocks high in air, on jutting points of Niagara Falls, deep down in great caves, under bridges, on barn-doors, on trees, in the trains, on curbstones, in the bed-rooms of my hotels. Plantation Bitters. Faugh!"

"Just so," he remarked. "The eyes are dosed to death with the loathsome announcement. Look at the wall of that graveyard."

I did as I was bidden, and stencilled in huge blue letters as large as a circus poster, I read—

IF YOU WOULD KEEP OUT OF HERE—USE PLANTATION BITTERS.

This last illustration of the omnipresent advertisement convinced me that the Salt Lakers outshone any of their Eastern brethren in the art of puffing their wares. The fierce light that beats upon a throne is a feeble flickering child's night-light compared with the conflagration of publicity that illuminates the goods of a Mormon dealer, especially if he be in the quack medicine line.

As we strolled back into the city to have a look at the lovely orchards under a cloudless turquoise sky, I found Brigham Young shrewd, chatty, observant and communicative, but by no means learned. Of history he seemed to know nothing. An allusion being made to the dismemberment of the Roman Empire and the reign of Charlemagne, I incidentally mentioned Belisarius, and he inquired in what way he had distinguished himself. He knew little about Mahomet—a character one would have thought would have had peculiar fascinations for him,—and the devoted Peter the Hermit he dismissed in a sentence as "an infatuated old fogey." He quickly broke away from a conversation leading to books, and preferred to talk of his beloved Utah, its population, its progress, its agricultural products, its ore and bullion, its assessment-roll, its schools, exports and taxes. He told anecdotes well, and, like most native-born Americans, had a quick sense of humour.

I remember an incident he related apropos of the rowdy character of the miners in the reckless days of the early settlements. He was travelling incognito in one of the Southern districts of the territory, and on the margin of a copper mine he came to a rough cabin built of mud and logs, sporting a fine name—"THE GRAND CONTINENTAL HOTEL." He struck a bargain with the landlord to dine with the regular boarders, and the meal soon appeared on the table. Instead of beating a gong or ringing a bell to summon the men to dinner, the host inserted a huge quid of "twist" in his cheek, brought out a shot-gun, slouched out rather than walked to the front door, and discharged one of the barrels in the air.

"Oh ho," said Brigham, "that's the way you do it, eh? Why don't you let off that other barrel?"

"Not ezackly," replied the landlord, with a twinkle of the eye; "I know a trick worth two of that. I keep that barrel for

any son of a sea-cook that refuses to pay for his dinner. I know how to handle these boys. We pay as we go here. I don't keep no books. No slate-debts nor chalk-scores for me. That (pointing to the shot-gun) settles everything. It's judge and jury round here, and saves law expenses."

Brigham also told me of a device of a hard-up miner to procure a drink at this same Grand Continental Hotel. He rushed into the bar-room in an affected state of furious excitement. The bar-keeper was alone, playing a solitary game of "fly-loo," which consists of watching flies alight on three lumps of sugar, and betting which lump attracts the most flies."

"For God's sake," quoth the fellow, "give me half-a-pint of whiskey—quick, there's going to be the biggest kind of a fight here in about a minit."

At the prospect of a row the bar-keeper jumped for a bottle and glass, which he handed to the miner—a hulking fellow in a red shirt, with his trousers tucked into his boots—and he quickly gargled his throat with half-a-pint of raging red-eye whiskey. This seemed to compose him. Wiping his cavernous mouth with his sleeve, breathing a deep sigh and glancing defiantly around him, he prepared to "rid that ranche of his presence," as the saying goes out there.

"Hi! hi!" called the bar-keeper. "You haven't paid for that drink."

"No, nor I don't mean," roared the miner; "I haven't got a red cent. I was as dry as a sermon. Didn't I tell you there was going to be a fight in about a minit? Come on now. Let me bombard you. In ten seconds you'll feel you take no further interest in life. Step out now till I put a head on you;" and striking a defiant attitude, he knotted his broad hands into huge fists and rattled his teeth like castanets.

The bar-keeper appreciated the situation. The landlord and the old shot-gun were out of the way at the moment. He only said,

"Well, pardner, I'm sold. Come and take a drink with *me* this time, but don't tell any of the boys how you had me. I should never hear the last of their cursed chin-music."

And the twain adjourned to the bar-room and put themselves outside of another pint of scorching rye-juice—a vintage only to be found on the prairies of the Far West. They say out there that it kills at five paces—it's so deadly strong.

THE END.

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